



THE INDEPENDENT

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I won't change direction, says Blair

TONY BLAIR today rejects calls for a change of direction after the crisis that has engulfed the Government, and insists he will press on with his radical and controversial plans to modernise Britain.

In his first detailed statement since Labour's "Black Christmas", the Prime Minister writes in *The Independent*: "We will carry on putting forward a sustained programme of modernisation... we will carry on offering Britain the new politics on which we were elected."

Mr Blair's declaration will disappoint Labour MPs hoping for a change of course in re-

BY ANDREW GRICE AND COLIN BROWN in Pretoria

nomic line in today's article, saying: "We will find growth on fiscal and financial prudence." He also rejects "the old left's belief in a trade-off between growth and inflation".

Mr Blair says: "We will continue to be for the future, not for the past... We will continue to govern as New Labour."

Insisting he will get the Government back on track after two weeks of turmoil, Mr Blair adds: "Nobody ever went into government thinking it would be a nice, easy, nine-to-five job. It takes resolve, determination, real grip, and a sense of purpose and direction."

He makes clear, however, that the "strong leadership" which is his trademark "is not an end in itself, it is for the purpose of making every family better off, and giving every child a chance".

Pledging to put the Government's troubles behind it, he says: "We will continue to concentrate not on the politics of scandal and gossip, but on the politics of the fundamentals and of the big picture."

However, Mr Blair appears to acknowledge that the public's honeymoon with the Government is ending as the economy worsens. "I know that in

Britain, many people are facing the future with apprehension, unsure of what it will bring," he says.

He concedes it will "take time" for Labour's reforms to public services to take effect, and says: "We want to see more results, and better results. But we are making a difference."

Admitting his reforms will run into controversy, he says: "There are bound to be setbacks. We will face them, determinedly. There are bound to be attacks. We will respond to them, robustly."

Today, the Prime Minister, who is on a three-day visit to

South Africa, will continue his campaign to steady the Government's ship in a keynote speech, saying his goal is the transformation of the country and its institutions.

Mr Blair will admit that he will be accused of being "authoritarian and harsh" as the Government's reforms are unveiled in the coming months. But he will insist the changes to welfare, education, law and order and the NHS are "controversial but right".

Further signs of tension in the Cabinet over the Government's direction will surface today when the Secretary of

State for Education and Employment, David Blunkett – normally a "soft left" ally of Mr Prescott – rejects calls for a change of strategy.

Speaking to local authority leaders in Sunderland, Mr Blunkett will say: "Modernisation is the only way to achieve traditional aspirations such as greater equality, better health and education and reduced crime. Modernisation is central to this Government's approaches. It has been since May 1997 and will continue to be in 1999 and beyond."

He will make clear he will not shirk from "tough action" against poorly-performing local education authorities (LEAs), saying he was ready to use new powers to transfer their functions to private firms, non-profit making bodies or other LEAs. "We cannot afford to let children and their schools down."

The Tory leader, William Hague, yesterday accused the Cabinet of being "consumed by personal rivalries and in-fighting". And he added: "We have had more back-biting in the last few weeks than you could cram into an episode of *Dallas* – it has been an extraordinary affair."

In the township, page 6

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'Judge in Black' is sworn in for trial of century

BY MARY DEJEVSKY AND ANDREW MARSHALL in Washington

AT 12.55 yesterday, escorted by five senators and a posse of security guards, the Chief Justice of the United States, William Rehnquist, walked solemnly into the chamber of the US Senate. It was a formal entrance without precedent in living memory.

"Pleased to welcome you," drawled Strom Thurmond, the

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96-year-old "father" of the Senate, inviting Mr Rehnquist to take the oath. "Do you solemnly swear that in all things pertaining to the trial of the impeachment of William Jefferson Clinton, now pending, that I will do impartial justice according to the Constitution and laws, so help you God?"

"I do," replied Justice Rehnquist clearly, but without awe or pomp, and proceeded to administer the same oath to the assembled senators.

The two is a snapshot of America in



Chief Justice William Rehnquist being sworn in yesterday to preside over the Senate impeachment trial of President Bill Clinton. Reuters

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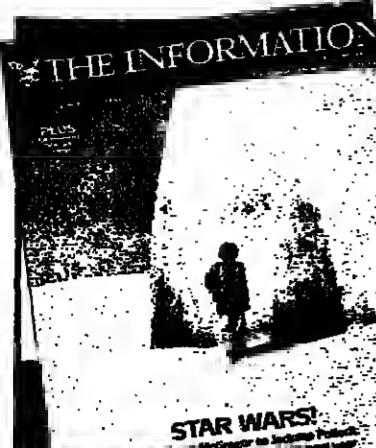
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Mandelson on home ground

PETER MANDELSON yesterday made his first formal constituency engagement after resigning over his £373,000 personal loan from the former paymaster-general, Geoffrey Robinson.

Mr Mandelson, the former secretary of state for trade and industry and now simply MP for Hartlepool, visited a local company, Clydesdale Forging, to hear the management's concerns over energy costs and the level of interest rates. Later, he held his regular surgery in the town's civic centre.

Having rediscovered the routine of life as a backbench MP in his north-east constituency, he is expected to hold talks today with Bodo Hombach, the German Chancery Minister.

The visit to the company had been arranged while Mr Mandelson was still a cabinet minister. But the management was keen for it to go ahead to press for his help in their efforts to reduce electricity prices, which they complain have risen well above the inflation rate. Mr Mandelson promised to do what he could as the local MP.

Today's meeting in London

with Mr Hombach is one of a series which the Prime Minister has asked him to continue despite having lost his ministerial post. They are aimed at strengthening political dialogue with the new Social Democratic German government and setting a new agenda for European-wide social democracy.

On Wednesday Mr Mandelson went shopping in Hartlepool's Tesco where his agent, Steve Wallace, said he was received warmly with shoppers coming up to him "in every aisle" to offer their support. Mr Wallace claimed Mr Mandelson had had around 200 letters of communication from constituents, and only one hostile one.

Mr Mandelson said that it was "nice to be back among people who know me and take me for what I am and keep telling me to keep my chin up. This is a great town with no-nonsense attitudes. People are not swayed by the media one way or the other".

He said that after escaping from the "fast political world of London" he felt "safe and secure in Hartlepool where my friends are".



Peter Mandelson at Clydesdale Forging in Hartlepool yesterday during his first official visit since his resignation from the Cabinet

Richard Rayner

low and stable inflation. "Obviously we are pleased with the news of the cuts in interest rates," Mr Blair said.

However, the Shadow Treasury chief secretary, David Heathcoat-Amory, said the move showed the Bank believed the economic outlook was weaker than the Government was doing too little, too late.

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Kate Barker, chief economist at the Confederation of British Industry, said: "A further quarter-point cut is welcome in itself, but is unlikely to dispel the sense of New Year blues."

But most City experts believe the Bank, which said the continuing economic slowdown explained its decision, will announce another reduction in the cost of loans next month. Interest rates are expected to fall to 5 per cent by the summer.

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Kenner Jones (left), charismatic leader of the Kairos evangelical movement: as a choirboy at the investiture of the Prince of Wales in Caernarfon in 1969 (above); and with Paddy Ashdown and Alex Carlile at the Islwyn by-election in 1995 (right) BBC Wales

The evangelical fraudster tasked with showing prisoners the light

able inflation. "Obviously pleased with the cuts in interest rates," Blair said. Mr. Shadow Treasury Secretary, David Amory, said he "owed the Bank better than the Government's economic outlook." Echoing the many in industry, political Democrat Treasuror, Malcolm Bradbury, said the Government should work together to bring the new "level of 3 per cent." K mortgage lenders a standard variable rate, the long-term rate, for existing customers at the Coventry Society, dropped to 6.75 percent. "We welcome yesterday's boost to the falling market."

Cogan, director of the Council of Mortgagors, said: "It will be a positive for the market."

Today's institutions' rate cuts in savings rates allowed to take control of entire prison wings is a consummate concern with over 70 criminal convictions.

He has served three prison sentences in Britain, and been jailed in Canada and the United States, where government officials have described him as "a danger to society." Yet the Prison Service has given him a stamp of approval.

Prison chiefs believe that Kairos - which requires inmates to undertake a mysterious spiritual experience known as "The Journey" - can significantly reduce violence in jails and lessen the likelihood of prisoners reoffending. Hundreds of prisoners have applied to join Kairos units, which are carpeted and allow unsupervised visits for prisoners' friends and relatives.

But *The Independent* has obtained a confidential prison service report into Kairos that rings alarm bells over the

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

amount of control being handed to Mr. Jones. The report is especially concerned by the lack of "a formal monitoring system" for the £300,000 Charitable Trust Fund, which is used to run the project.

Mr. Jones is described in the report and by Kairos staff as the "Trust Administrator". The report notes: "It is strongly advised to keep a close

financial control of the Kairos Trust and the appointment of trustees or fiduciaries who are versed with legal and financial skills ought to be considered."

The report's author Ursula Smartt, a prison expert based at Thames Valley University, has every reason to be concerned: Jones has a criminal history of fraud and deception dating back to 1973.

Kairos - which is described by its proponents as "an intense course in leadership based on Christian values and teach-

ings" - began in Brazil 27 years ago, and is credited in America for having a marked effect on rates of reoffending.

An affiliate was established in Britain two years ago by a prison officer at the Verne prison in Dorset. Mr. Jones, who was then serving a sentence for fraud, quickly joined the project team and, as a model Kairos graduate, was given the salaried job of national co-ordinator when he was released.

He has set up a Kairos administration office near the prison in Weymouth but spends much of his time promoting the scheme at other prisons.

Yesterday he was at the Prison Service's Cleland House headquarters in London discussing the expansion of Kairos with senior officials.

Questioned by *The Independent* over his criminal past he at first played it down and said that he was a reformed man.

"I realise that you cannot live life without facing the consequences of your actions. Everyone is responsible for

the way they live. If you don't conform to what society rightly demands then you suffer the consequences."

But investigators who have tracked his international criminal career say Mr. Jones' claims have a familiar ring to them. According to Detective Sergeant Dave Allinson, of South Wales Police: "There is documentation throughout Jones' criminal history of him being involved in church affairs and complaints being made over the administration of accounts connected with these religious groups."

His undoubtedly talents first surfaced when as a student at Sheffield Polytechnic he helped the Liberal Party to win its first seat on the city council in 1985.

Soon after, however, he disappeared, leaving a trail of debts.

He was later sentenced to three years' probation. The man whose piety had inspired the nickname "Archbishop" resurfaced in Surrey where he again became involved in local politics and the church.

But the frauds continued and Mr. Jones was given two more prison sentences before he returned to his native North Wales in the early Eighties.

It was on the promenade at Llandudno that the smooth-talking Mr. Jones charmed a Canadian television newsreader, who was in Wales researching her family tree.

They later married and moved to Vancouver before the relationship fell apart when Mr. Jones was found to have plundered his wife's savings for thousands of pounds.

Marc Edwards, who trailed

Mr. Jones' movements across North America for a 1995 documentary for the BBC Welsh language programme *Thro Niw*, said: "He seems to take a perverse pleasure in betraying people's trust."

"The frauds are often for quite small amounts but the damage is to people's belief in human nature."

Styling himself as a journalist from "The London Economist" and wearing tweed clothing, Mr. Jones moved to Virginia, where he offered to work for the Republican Party. He was later convicted of passing bad cheques and sentenced to nine years for deception.

Released on parole two years later, he fled back to Canada but was arrested again

in possession of a stolen chequebook. But while awaiting trial in Oakalla prison, British Columbia, Mr. Jones used his words to write a heart-rending article on "Life Behind Bars" for a local newspaper.

The article made a great impression on Elsie Hager, a disabled septuagenarian widow who had founded a local church. After Mr. Jones' release they married but in 1991 immigration officials caught up with the Welshman and ordered him to leave Canada for good. The couple then headed for California, where again Mr. Jones joined the local church and began telling neighbours in the small town of Cambria that he knew the Prince of Wales.

But the Welshman's criminal

past was then exposed again. A senior US immigration official, Ken Elwood, said that Mr. Jones was "probably the best criminal I have come across in my entire career".

Barred from living in America, the couple headed for Wales and Jones resumed his involvement in politics, becoming a volunteer for the Liberal Democrats. After impressing party officials first with his false claims to have been an assistant to Al Gore in the 1988 presidential campaign in America and then with his energetic work at the Islwyn by-election in 1995, where he showed leader Paddy Ashdown around the constituency, Mr. Jones was selected to stand as a local councillor. But while he

had been directed to the party, Mr. Jones had been abusing his political connections to carry out a complex web of frauds.

Bills for hotel stays and other goods and services were all directed to the party.

Mr. Jones issued a series of false cheques from Canadian chequebooks and even used the headed notepad of the prominent barrister and former LibDem MP Alex Carlile to forge an extravagant reference for a bank.

But yesterday Mr. Jones claimed his days as a fraudster were over and that measures had been put into place to ensure that he had no direct access to the Kairos money.

"I don't have anything to do with finances," he said.



Jones first discovered Kairos at Verne prison, Dorset

JURY OUT ON SYSTEM THAT CLAIMS TO TURN HATE INTO LOVE

MANY PRISONERS who have undertaken the Kairos-APAC project claim to have undergone a remarkable transformation.

In the Verne prison, in Dorset, the project has brought a new calm to D Wing, which was once so violent that inmates referred to it as "Beirut".

But, according to a confidential Prison Service report on Kairos-APAC written last month, the claims of organisers that the project dramatically reduces reoffending rates are open to question.

The author, the prisons expert Ursula Smartt, warns: "Currently, results are only

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Drug boost for depressed dogs

BY ANDREW GUMBLE
Los Angeles

can include vomiting and diarrhoea.

The second drug, Anipryl, is based on the same chemical as a common drug used by humans to combat Parkinson's disease. It will be administered to older dogs who show signs of being confused, nervous, stay awake all night and lose control of their bowels.

The FDA said the drug, made by Pfizer, was not a cure but was shown in 60 per cent of test cases to alleviate at least one of the symptoms of cognitive dysfunction syndrome.

Clomicalm, which is made by a US subsidiary of the Swiss pharmaceutical company Novartis, will be prescribed for dogs of six months and older.

Unfortunately, the side-effects



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BUREAUCRATS AT THE HEART OF GRAVY TRAIN SCANDAL



Paul Van Buitenen
The 41-year-old Dutchman who provoked the storm was an anonymous mid-ranking civil servant, an assistant in the internal audit unit of the Commission until Christmas Eve when he was suspended after publicising his allegations.

Attempts to discredit him suggest he is a political activist for the Greens, a claim he denies. Says he has no ambitions other than to be a devout Christian and "an honest man".



Edith Cresson
The 65-year-old former French Prime Minister, commissioner for education and training since 1995, could be one of the victims of the sleaze outcry, even though Paul Van Buitenen has not alleged any personal wrongdoing. Mme Cresson is best known in Britain for some of her own memorable allegations: one was that most Englishmen are homosexual, another that the Japanese are a nation of ants.



Manuel Marin
The Spaniard in charge of EU policy on Third World development has the appearance of a Franciscan monk and is reputed to be a dark brooding melancholic. Marin, 49, now in his second term as commissioner, was responsible for the EU's humanitarian aid office when irregularities, now under police investigation, were allegedly perpetrated. He denies any personal wrongdoing.



Jacques Santer
Avuncular and mild-mannered, Santer, 62, seemed shocked to find his traditional new year press conference turn to chaos amid mounting allegations about fraud this week. The Commission President is the former Premier of Luxembourg and emerged from political obscurity as a compromise and, therefore, weak, candidate after John Major vetoed the man everyone else wanted to replace Jacques Delors.



Erkki Liikanen
Finland's first commissioner has been doing his best to bring upright Scandinavian values into the French and Italian-dominated bureaucracy. In charge of the £60bn budget and the internal administration, he has provoked uproar by scrapping traditional perks, attempting to modernise procedures and rid Brussels of its gravy train reputation. Tells people how he comes from a culture where cronyism is alien.

Sleaze row could ruin Santer's team

THE SLEAZE crisis gripping Brussels approached meltdown yesterday, as a welter of extraordinary allegations and a public relations disaster engulfed the European Commission.

As claims of corruption, intimidation, cronyism and nepotism within the organisation

BY KATHERINE BUTLER
AND STEPHEN CASTLE
in Brussels

For the second time in two days extraordinary allegations broke surface as the whistleblower at the centre of the row went public with allegations that there were threats against him and his family. Counter-claims included suggestions that the revelations were po-

litically inspired, and that a dirty tricks campaign was being investigated by security services.

With Brussels plunged into an unprecedented internal crisis, all 20 European commissioners could, in theory, find themselves out of a job by this time next week. That would call

into question the sweeping package of reforms aimed at preparing the EU for enlargement and could even undermine the credibility of the euro.

Although the two-thirds majority needed to sack the whole Commission is unlikely, tempers have been inflamed by the

untimely suspension of the whistleblower, Paul van Buitenen. In an unexpected twist, Socialist MEPs said yesterday they would rather vote the entire Commission out of office than see individual commissioners "impeached".

Mr van Buitenen claims he has faced physical threats over his allegations. At an impromptu press conference he said: "I felt threatened. I had phone calls from colleagues who counselled me to leave my home immediately." As reported yesterday by *The Independent*, Mr van Buitenen claims he has evidence that guards were arming themselves with snipers' rifles complete with telescopic sights and silencers.

Earlier the European Commission President, Jacques Santer, gave an unconvincing interview on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme that failed to make further checks.

Socialist political leaders argued that all the commissioners targeted were from the left, indicating that the campaign was "politically motivated".

Edith Cresson, one of the commissioners implicated in the crisis, even hinted to French journalists that allegations against her were dirty tricks now being investigated by the security services.

Officials are stunned at the speed with which the drama has unfolded. Mr van Buitenen himself said yesterday that the Commission "as a whole is not corrupt and fraudulent", adding: "If I thought that, I would not be seeking reinstatement."

But a combination of complacency, cack-handedness and lack of political touch has projected a row over financial irregularities into a full-scale political show-down.

With open season against the Commission, even Mr Santer has faced personal questioning. At a bizarre press conference on Wednesday, the EC president was quizzed about his wife's property dealings. Clearly taken aback, he recited in alarm before giving a lengthy explanation of how he and his wife fund their three homes in Luxembourg.

Later the focus moved on to the financial affairs of the wife of the Finnish commissioner, Erkki Liikanen. Within minutes, Mr Liikanen emerged

from his office to make an impassioned defence of his wife's dealings, and giving out her phone number for anyone who wanted to make further checks.

The two sitting commissioners in the main spotlight are Ms Cresson and Manuel Marin. Ms Cresson is blamed for poor administration of a youth training programme and for alleged favouritism in awarding of contracts. Mr Marin is under fire over the administration of the multi-million pound humanitarian aid budget, "Echo", which he controlled until 1995, and the "Med" programme designed to help Mediterranean countries.

The trouble started last month when the Strasbourg parliament threatened to refuse to sign off a set of EU accounts for 1996. At that point Mr van Buitenen delivered his

dossier to the Greens who released it publicly, in the process accidentally revealing his identity. The dossier argued that inefficiency was widespread and that fraud investigations were often cursory. However, the Commission still looked likely to win the vote, until it issued a "back us or sack us" ultimatum to MEPs. The letter spectacularly backfired and the vote went the other way.

Mr Santer's backers, including the Socialist group, put down a censure motion assuming it would be rejected emphatically with the Commission cleared in the process. Again that looked likely before news of the Commission's next blunder - Mr van Buitenen's suspension.

Unknown to Mr Santer's cabinet, Mr van Buitenen was suspended on 18 December by officials in charge of personnel in line with procedures. News of the decision emerged on Monday, inflaming passions ahead of next week's vote.

Yesterday the political crisis intensified as one of the Commission's defenders, Pauline Green, leader of the Socialist MEPs, raised the stakes in response to moves by Conservative and other MEPs to target individual European commissioners. If there was significant support for a motion criticising individuals, her group would vote next week to sack the entire Commission, she said.

Edward McMillan-Scott, leader of the Conservative MEPs, called for the resignation of six commissioners, adding: "Heads must now roll."

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Cherie and Tony Blair are greeted by South African President Nelson Mandela, in Pretoria yesterday.

Mandela aide on mission to Libya

HOPES of a breakthrough in the negotiations to bring the two Libyan suspects to trial for the Lockerbie bombing were raised yesterday by Tony Blair and President Nelson Mandela in South Africa.

President Mandela, who interceded on the issue with Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, announced he is sending his chief of staff, Jake Gerwel, on a special flight to Libya within 48 hours to seal a deal over the trial with the Libyan leader.

The United Nations Security Council is expected to give special permission for UN sanctions against Libya to be temporarily lifted to allow the direct flight to Tripoli to go ahead.

Mr Gerwel, who is Mr Mandela's under-secretary at the South African foreign office, and the Sandi ambassador to Washington, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, are flying to Tripoli to try to secure agreement from Colonel Gaddafi for the trial to take place in The Hague.

Although there have been false dawns over the trial, the

BY COLIN BROWN
in Pretoria

South African President and the Prime Minister signalled that it may now go ahead.

"We have made good progress," said President Mandela at a joint press conference with Mr Blair outside his state mansion in Pretoria.

The Libyan leader was close to agreement on a trial in The Hague last month, after Britain and the United States conceded his demand for it to be held in a third country, but under Scottish law, with Scottish judges.

Colonel Gaddafi objected to the two Libyan suspects having to serve any sentences in a Scottish prison. He threw in another obstacle by insisting on an international panel of judges, including a Libyan.

The Libyan leader was put under renewed pressure to back down by next month with the threat of further UN sanctions. It was not clear last night what concessions had been made, but British minis-

ters have made clear they would not compromise over holding the trial under Scottish law, and for sentences to be served in Scotland.

Lifting sanctions against Libya would bring economic benefits to the country, which has always denied its involvement in bringing down Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie 10 years ago, with the loss of 270 lives.

Mr Blair said: "We have made a lot of progress on an issue which people thought was completely intractable."

The Prime Minister had urged Mr Mandela to use his personal influence with Colonel Gaddafi to find a way through the impasse and had been hoping that his visit to South Africa would herald a breakthrough.

There appeared to be a warm friendship between Mr Blair and Mr Mandela as they held a short press conference. Mr Blair paid an emotional tribute to Mr Mandela, who is to hand over office this year. "During his long political life, whether in adversity or good

times, he has shown compassion, commitment, integrity, strength and forgiveness," Mr Blair said. "He has been throughout his life a shining light. I don't believe that light will ever be dimmed."

There was one area of friendly disagreement, however, over South Africa's bid to stage the World Cup in 2006, which Britain is also bidding for, with Germany. The Deputy President, Thabo Mbeki, who will almost certainly take over from Mr Mandela after elections, said it was "Africa's turn" to stage the World Cup.

Mr Mandela jokingly invited Mr Blair to be "generous" and give up Britain's counter bid. Mr Blair grinned and said: "I said there will be friendly rivalry over this."

Mr Blair has also signed an accord for possible multi-million pound defence contracts with South Africa which could generate business worth £1bn. And he announced a 40 per cent increase in aid to South Africa over the next three years, totalling £90m.

'We are the rape capital of the world'

BY ED O'LOUGHLIN
in Johannesburg

Another non-governmental organisation, Community Information, Empowerment and Transparency, found that of 1,500 young people between 14 and 18-years-old surveyed recently, one third had suffered sexual abuse and 12 per cent of the boys said they had had sex without the consent of the girl.

A worker at the centre said: "Violence against women in this country has reached epidemic proportions. South Africa is regarded as the rape capital of the world."

Then the Soul City non-profit media organisation aired a clip from its forthcoming, partly UK-funded, public education television soap opera.

The Blairs watched as the soap's upwardly mobile black middle class school teacher, played by the cherubic Patrick Shai ("Christmas" in the BBC's recent biopic of Cecil Rhodes) turned into a chillingly convincing wife batterer at the drop of a gender-role-challenge.

The mainly black audience broke into knowing laughter as Mr Shai later told his son: "I hope that one day you'll understand that when you are in your own home you have to be a captain, otherwise the ship will sink."

Afterwards an obviously emotional Mr Blair rose to say that Britain was supporting the public education project because it was a vital step towards building a strong and decent South Africa from the brutalised legacy of apartheid.

"The reason why we feel violence against women is such an important issue is not only that the statistics in South Africa are so frightening but because it has an impact of degrading and dehumanising life in civil society," he said.

Then it was across Louis Botha Avenue to Johannesburg's white northern suburbs, for a reception with the business community.

But any cynicism lurking at the back of the clinic's tin-roofed hall quickly evaporated when Minabatho Ramagoshi, chairwoman of the National Network on Violence Against Women, described the prevalence of rape in South Africa.

Te Deums to Britain's first couple, while Cherie hopped her chin in time and Tony stooped in the dust to pat an African child on the head.

Outside the hall a bulletin board proclaimed "the user friendly theme of the week" which read: "Try to be happy in your workplace", and "practise random acts of kindness and senseless beauty".

Home grown slogans, it turned out, and not the work of Third Way spin doctors, but then Mr Blair visited this same clinic while in opposition two years ago and perhaps some of his magic rubbed off.

But any cynicism lurking at the back of the clinic's tin-roofed hall quickly evaporated when Minabatho Ramagoshi, chairwoman of the National Network on Violence Against Women, described the prevalence of rape in South Africa.

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Minabatho Ramagoshi, chairwoman

Trader 'sorry' for losing £6m

has shown commitment, integrity and forgiveness. Mr d. "He has been it his life a shining light that light is dimmed."

was one area of disagreement, how South Africa's bid to World Cup in 2006 is also bidding Germany. The Deputy President Mbeki, who certainly take over Mandela after he died, is "Africa's" idea jokingly invited to be "generous" and Britain's counter bid grinned and said: "I will be friendly to this."

He has also signed an agreement with the possible multi-billion defence contract South Africa which he announced a week ago in aid to increase in aid to Africa over the next 10 years, totalling £90m

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE
AND ANDREW GARFIELD

amounts ranging between £15,000 and £1m - it will take a minimum of between six and eight weeks. The mood at the meeting became increasingly ugly and the FSA's officials were booted and heckled.

After spending a week in hiding, John Ho Park said he was sorry for what he had done. He broke into tears. "I am sorry," said Mr Ho Park, who was traced by reporters to an address in central London where he has been staying with his girlfriend, Charlotte Curington.

A Cambridge graduate and the son of a Korean millionaire, Mr Ho Park, 27, sparked the biggest trading scandal to hit the City since Nick Leeson broke Barings Bank after gambling on German government bonds. Over a two-day period before Christmas he lost at least £6.2m, causing the collapse of the Griffin Trading Company.

Yesterday, at a heated meeting called by the Financial Services Authority regulatory body, about 100 self-employed life insurance brokers called on the officials to get their cash back.

They were told that while they may recoup up to 50 per cent of their investments -

to be able to cover their costs and place money on deposit with a respected firm.

Many traders were shocked to find that Mr Ho Park was able to gain access to this centrally held pot of money to fund his trading.

"We are the fall guys in all of this. Why is it the small guys who have lost out?" said one trader. Another shouted: "Are the Serious Fraud Office going to be called in to investigate?"

The SFO said yesterday that it was not investigating Mr Ho Park, though the FSA said if it uncovered any wrongdoing it would not hesitate to call in the "appropriate authorities".

The provisional liquidator of Griffin in the UK, Finbar O'Connell of accountants Grant Thornton, told the meeting he would be speaking to Mr Ho Park in the next few days.

Mr Thornton said he would have to take legal advice before making any decision about how any remaining money should be divided.

At the heart of the scandal is the way in which the traders work. To trade, individuals have

Brutal lesson, Business, page 19
When 'sorry' is not enough, Review front



Left: Gucci showing its autumn/winter collection in Milan in 1998; right, the first Vuitton fashion collection being shown in Paris last spring. Centre, from top: LVMH chairman Bernard Arnault, Gucci designer Tom Ford and Dior designer John Galliano

Reuters/AP

Cashmere wolf bites at Gucci's heels

THEY CALL him "the wolf in cashmere clothing" and yesterday Bernard Arnault, chairman of LVMH (Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton) confirmed his reputation as the most wily character in international fashion.

Not content with presiding over numerous French fashion and beauty houses - including Christian Dior, Givenchy, Christian Lacroix, Kenzo and Louis Vuitton - Mr Arnault has this week snapped up "5 per cent plus" shares in Gucci, one of Italy's oldest luxury fashion houses. Gucci shares have risen 19 per cent since Tuesday.

ceot share in Diageo, he could raise up to £2.6bn to buy Gucci.

Mr Arnault has had his eye on the move, as did LVMH, but, under United States law, the fashion conglomerate is obliged to issue a declaration of intent within the next week or so. Analysts predict that Mr Arnault will mount a full bid for the company before long. Such speculation is fuelled by the fact that, only a week ago, he resigned from the board of Diageo, the British food and drinks company which owns both Burger King and Little Chef. If he were to sell LVMH's 11 per

But Mr Arnault is not the only person with his eye on Gucci. Last summer Gucci's arch-rival, Prada, acquired a 5 per cent stake in the company and soon afterwards took another 4.5 per cent, making it the label's largest shareholder.

When asked at that time whether he would be able to resist stepping into the fray, Mr Arnault said: "Gucci is a remarkable company which has had excellent growth. For our part, LVMH has a strategy aimed at strengthening our presence in the US and Europe. All kinds of opportunities present themselves."

IN BRIEF

Daughter escapes fatal house fire

A WOMAN escaped from a house fire in which her parents and elder sister perished early yesterday, hours after her 21st birthday party. Marie Boyle was able to climb from her rooftop window at the family home in Co Down, Northern Ireland. Fire crews said the house was an "inferno".

GP sent for trial on murder counts

HAROLD SHIPMAN, a general practitioner, was committed for trial yesterday at Crown Court on two murder charges. Dr Shipman, 52, who ran a one-man practice in Hyde, Greater Manchester, has been charged with murdering a total of eight female patients.

Patient's body in hospital grounds

A HOSPITAL has started an inquiry into how a patient was found dead in its grounds five days after disappearing from his bed on Christmas Eve. Edward Doran, 66, who suffered from Parkinson's disease, was found at Chase Farm Hospital in Enfield, north London.

Slow lawyers must pay £150,000

A MAN WHO has not eaten for 10 years after accidentally swallowing caustic soda won £150,000 yesterday in damages from solicitors who failed to pursue his case quickly enough. Lee Ellison, 28, from Stockport, receives liquid food through a tube straight to his stomach.

Humans 'wiped out giant animals'

HUMANS PROBABLY caused the extinction of more than 85 per cent of Australia's large animals 50,000 years ago by burning vegetation, scientists said yesterday. Among the creatures that disappeared were 20ft-long lizards, hippo-sized wombats and carnivorous kangaroos.

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Health: Researchers say that contraceptive does not cause long-term damage as tumour gene is identified

Pill gets all-clear in 25-year study

THE CONTRACEPTIVE pill was cleared of causing long-term harm to women after one of the world's longest and largest studies concluded that its small adverse effects on health disappear within 10 years of giving it up.

It had been feared the Pill's known tendency to increase slightly the risk of blood clots (causing strokes) and certain cancers, including those of the breast and cervix, might persist long after women had given up and reached middle or old age. The increased risk would then be more serious, because these diseases are more common at older ages.

Yesterday Valerie Beral, leader of the 25-year study, conducted among 46,000 women and published in the *British Medical Journal*, said: "This is good news for women. We have known for a long time that the risk of developing certain conditions is slightly increased in women taking the Pill."

"Our new figures show that by the time women who have used the Pill have been off it for 10 years, their risk of developing these conditions is similar to

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

what it would have been if they had never taken the Pill at all."

About 3 million women are current users of the Pill in Britain and 300 million have used it worldwide. Introduced to the UK in 1961, it ushered in an era of sexual freedom for women but from the start there were fears about side-effects.

The first scare, linking it with blood clots in the legs, came in 1969 and the most recent in October 1995, also involving blood clots. In the nine months after this latest scare there were 10,000 extra abortions, taking the total number to its highest level since records began in 1969.

The current study was begun in 1968 by Clifford Kay, a Manchester GP who collected information on all aspects of the health of women on the Pill from 1,400 general practitioners. Yesterday he said: "There are few other studies which have involved quite so many people for so long. Its findings must be reassuring. We have known for a long time about the effects of the Pill but there has always been a lurking fear that

something dreadful might pop out of the woodwork after 15, 20 or even 25 years, and this study shows clearly that it hasn't."

During the study, 1,600 of the 46,000 women died. They were on average 25 when the study started and half were on the Pill. By the end, two-thirds had taken the Pill for an average of five years. The results show that among current and recent users of the Pill, deaths from stroke were 90 per cent higher and deaths from cervical cancer were 150 per cent higher than among non-users, but deaths from ovarian cancer were 80 per cent lower.

However, the actual increase or decrease in risk was small because of the small number of deaths involved - 34 from cervical cancer among women who had used the Pill compared with 13 who had never used it, and 87 deaths from cerebrovascular disease (mainly stroke) among those who had used it compared with 38 among non-users. Women who smoked as well as taking the Pill were at highest risk of stroke.

Professor Beral, director of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund's Cancer Epidemiology

Unit in Oxford, said: "Because deaths in this age group are low, these excess deaths are really very small indeed."

Most of the women had used a combined Pill containing 50 micrograms of oestrogen, higher than the low-dose pills common today. Professor Beral said it was likely the introduction of the low-dose pills meant the risks had fallen even lower.

Anne Weyman, chief executive of the Family Planning Association, said it was important GPs obtained an accurate picture of women's health, so that they could prescribe the correct type of Pill. "The study is reassuring, as it supports other findings which show the risks of the Pill, when correctly prescribed, are negligible."

Toni Bellfield, the association's director of information added: "There is a widespread lack of confidence about the Pill. There's always a desire to say the Pill is bad news, and it isn't. It's a good method of contraception when a woman wants to use it and is properly selected. Anyone thinking of using the Pill should have their blood pressure and a good family history taken."

Deborah Orr, Review page 5



Professor Valerie Beral and Dr Clifford Kay at yesterday's press conference on their study of the Pill. Russell Boyce

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Tube workers seek £2,000 'ransom'

ELECTRICIANS WORKING on the Jubilee Line extension are demanding a pay-off for finishing the line in time for the opening of the Millennium Dome.

The payment, of up to £2,000, would add up to £1.2m to the construction bill for the project (the JLE) which is already millions of pounds over-budget and 18 months behind schedule. The cost has soared from an original budgeted £1.8bn to more than £2bn.

The demand forms part of a redundancy settlement for workers, a common practice on any project with a final end date. However, the issue is likely to be politically sensitive because of concern over the delays to the JLE.

The engineering union AEEU is negotiating the workers' terms with Drake & Scull, the main electrical contractor on the link. Both sides are furious at reports that the pay-offs could reach £5,000 a person. A senior AEEU official said: "The union is in discussion with the company about the position of the men following completion of the project. But the figures being bandied around are way off the mark, very misleading and potentially damaging to industrial relations on the project."

It is understood relations between managers and unions on the project are much improved since last year when a series of disputes culminated in a 10-day unofficial walkout by the electricians. At the time, London Underground made clear it was deeply disappointed with the low levels of productivity among the electricians.

A Jubilee Line spokeswoman

BY PHILIP THORNTON
Transport Correspondent



A construction worker walking in the delayed Tube extension. The project has been dogged by problems since it began in 1993 Brian Harris

open at the end of April 1999; the second phase to Waterloo at the end of August; and the final link to the existing Jubilee Line at Green Park in late October. Major inequalities have been revealed in the distribution of

lottery awards, according to a survey for *Lottery Monitor* magazine published yesterday. Four local authority areas received no awards at all last year; some had more than 100.

The average number stands

at 16.8, but while Edinburgh had 141 - a total of £21.8m - Mole Valley in Surrey, Christchurch in Dorset, the Isles of Scilly, and Tamworth in the West Midlands had no money.

The Highlands, Glasgow and

Belfast were top after Edinburgh, and the magazine says that was because of the small grants programme run by the lottery boards in Scotland which helped people to apply for grants of less than £5,000.

A league table based on the amount of lottery money received per head over the past four years put Westminster top, with £1,864.41 per head, and North East Derbyshire bottom, with just £3.90 per person.

Police claim success in Christmas drink-drive campaign

CAR CRASHES involving drivers who had been drinking dropped by nearly a quarter over the Christmas period. Despite that, more than 1,000 motorists had accidents while over the limit.

Police figures, released yesterday, showed the number of motorists in England and Wales who failed breath tests taken

BY JASON BENNETT
Crime Correspondent

information on motorists who have been involved in an accident.

Ken Williams, the vice-chairman of the traffic committee of the Association of Chief Police Officers, said yesterday: "We are disappointed that a large number of people still commit this heinous crime."

Police chiefs again called on the Government to lower the legal alcohol limit from about two-and-a-half pints of normal strength beer to about one pint.

About 6 per cent - involving 1,081 people - of the tests done at 16,755 accidents during the police's Christmas drink-drive campaign were positive.

Police chiefs again called on the Government to lower the legal alcohol limit from about two-and-a-half pints of normal strength beer to about one pint.

They believe up to 50 lives a year could be saved if the lower level was introduced. Ministers are considering this but there are fears that they may be backing away from what could be an unpopular move.

The police say the success of the annual campaign means more motorists now drive while

over the limit in the summer months. This year, forces focused on men in their early twenties who, with middle-aged men, form the hard core of drivers who believe they can drink without it affecting their driving.

The advertising campaign

was spearheaded by a series of television commercials featuring

reconstructions of real alcohol-related road accidents.

While the number of deaths involving accidents with drink-drivers has fallen from 1,500 a year in the Eighties, it has remained at about 540 a year for the past five years.

Leading article, Review, page 3

Coach is banned in abuse inquiry

BY PAUL WATSON

NEWCASTLE CITY Council has suspended a male coach amid allegations of indecent assault of children at one of its sports centres.

The suspension comes just weeks after the council was criticised by an independent review team investigating allegations of sexual abuse of children at one of its nurseries.

The council refused to give details of the case yesterday, but a spokesman confirmed that social services chiefs were meeting police.

A Northumbria Police spokesman said: "We are investigating allegations of indecent assaults at a sports centre. These allegations do involve young people and it's likely to be a protracted inquiry."

The council has written to parents of children who use the centre to explain the suspension. A council spokeswoman said: "A member of staff has been suspended following a complaint and an investigation is under way. Until that develops further we cannot say more about the allegations."

"Those people who need to be made aware of the situation have been. Once the suspension had been made, letters went out to people who we thought might be able to help with the investigation."

The council was recently criticised after an inquiry sought by angry parents in response to a court case in which two nursery workers were accused of sexual offences against children in their care.

The charges were dismissed after the trial judge ruled that the videotaped evidence of an alleged victim, aged five, was inadmissible.

The council, which subsequently apologised publicly to parents of nursery children, has since implemented changes and is still discussing other recommendations outlined by the review team.

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11-plus exam flawed, says heads' panel

KEY ELEMENTS of the 11-plus exam to be taken by thousands of schoolchildren next week are flawed, according to an internal local authority document obtained by *The Independent*.

A consultation paper produced by the panel of head teachers that advises on the 11-plus in Kent warns that the English tests are unreliable and poor indicators of ability.

Anti-selection campaigners said yesterday that the document, which lists the "acknowledged advantages and disadvantages" of the tests, was proof that the grammar school system was unfair. But defenders of grammar schools said the system enjoyed widespread public confidence.

Education officers and head-teachers acknowledged that the English tests had long been criticised by some heads, but insisted the 11-plus exams were only one part of the selection process.

The revelation will reignite the debate over the remaining 166 grammar schools, which face abolition if parents vote to end selection.

The anti-grammar cam-

BY BEN RUSSELL
Education Correspondent

paign is at its most advanced in Kent where campaigners hope to trigger a ballot of parents possibly later this year.

The consultation paper, sent to all Kent head teachers before Christmas, was drawn up as part of an exercise to revamp the 11-plus next year. It warns that comprehension tests used as part of the 11-plus are "not reliable or discriminatory" and "give no correlation between ability and achievement". Marks for grammar and punctuation are "susceptible to coaching".

The paper praises the mathematics test, which forms the second part of the 11-plus, as "extremely reliable" and praises IQ-style verbal and non-verbal reasoning tests used by some of the county's grant-maintained grammar schools, which control their own admissions policies.

Half of Kent's 16,000 11-year-olds will take the 11-plus next week in the hope of becoming one of about 4,000 expected to gain a place at the county's 31 grammar schools.

The foundation insisted that Kent's test were accurate and consistent. Chris Whetton, the assistant director, said: "We analyse the tests for Kent and our analysis of their data showed they have high levels of reliability. We don't understand their criticisms."

Threat to failing LEAs

SHADY ADVISERS around the Prime Minister are pushing the Government into the privatisation of schools, local authority leaders said yesterday.

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, will tell local government representatives today that private companies may be invited to take over failing local education authorities. But council leaders suggested that a division between Downing Street and Mr Blunkett lies behind his tough talk about privatisation.

Neil Fletcher, education officer of the Local Government As-

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

society, which represents local councillors, said: "The flames are being fanned by unnamed Downing Street advisers ... We don't think it will happen."

Mr Blunkett will tell the North of England Education Conference in Sunderland how the Government intends to use new legal powers: if local authorities are not up to the job, they will be taken over by neighbouring education authorities, private companies or voluntary organisations.

Private companies are already encouraged to help to run new education action zones designed to raise standards. Tory councillors in Surrey have invited tenders for a private company to run a failing state school.

Local councils yesterday announced a campaign "to keep education democratic". Graham Lane, chairman of the Local Government Association's education committee, said: "The idea that somehow you can fail a local authority and send in Virgin Trains or Kellogg's Cornflakes or McDonald's to sort it out is ludicrous."

HILARY STRONG, the director of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, resigned yesterday, surprising her colleagues at the world's largest arts festival.

She received much criticism last year for changing the timing of the Fringe so that it began a week before the opening of the official festival. Some venues suffered poor ticket sales and there was confusion among the public.

Yesterday, Ms Strong said the controversy had nothing to do with her surprise resignation. She told *The Independent* she felt such a key position ought to be

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

held by a Scot. She said: "The move towards a Scottish parliament makes you question these things. The truth is I'm English and it's time to go back where one belongs."

Her remarks will cause a little discomfort for the director of the Edinburgh International Festival, Brian McMaster, who is also not Scottish.

Ms Strong will direct a community production of the *Grapes of Wrath* in Edinburgh before returning to London to co-write a

play. She will then seek another job in arts administration.

In her five years as director of the Fringe she proved a high-profile and largely successful operator; until last year

Some shows staged in the first week, including a Steve Harley concert, were poorly attended, but the fourth week performances such as Mark Little's stand-up show also suffered when audiences drifted away, believing the festival, which attracts about half a million people a year, was over.

Performances including David Mamet's *Lakeboat*, which

should have been one of last year's festival hits, played to disappointing audiences. In spite of the confusion, ticket sales were up 5 per cent. But there were 11 per cent more performances on 1997.

The change of timing, which Ms Strong had explained was due to poor weather in September among other reasons, will continue this year.

Baroness Smith, widow of the former Labour leader John Smith, and head of the Fringe committee said: "Hilary is a great enthusiast with innovative ideas and the personality to put

them into practice. We will all miss her greatly."

William Burden-Coutts, the artistic director of the Assembly Rooms, and an opponent of the dates change, said he was "deeply surprised" by Ms Strong's decision. He added: "I think she has been a very good director and although the compromise between the Fringe and the main Festival is an unhappy one, it would seem to me to be an odd time to be dropping out."

Mr McMaster said: "I've really enjoyed working with her and I'm very sorry to see her go."

Edinburgh Fringe director resigns



Hilary Strong (main picture) who resigned as director of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Her changing of the festival date led to confusion and poor ticket sales to shows by artists such as (right from top) David Mamet, Steve Harley and Mark Little

Ian Murray

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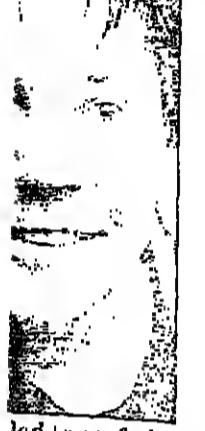
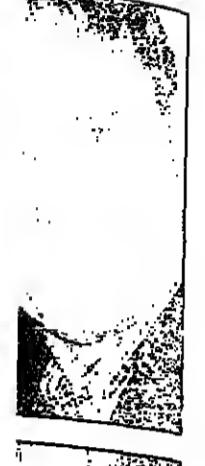
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PAGE 4

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out

CLINTON'S SENATE TRIAL

Child claim may stick like no other

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

FOR MONTHS it has been taken as read that the political composition of the Senate ensures that President Bill Clinton, even if tried, will not be convicted. But even if the votes simply are not there to convict and remove him from office, the sharks of scandal, gossip and innuendo are none the less circling - sensing, perhaps, that this President and this White House are injured and weak.

Last weekend saw the resurgence of a long-rumbling rumour that Mr Clinton might be the father of an illegitimate child in his home state of Arkansas - a child born to a black woman who was a prostitute in the months before the birth. There were reports, too, that Larry Flynt, publisher of *Hustler* magazine, was preparing to publish unsavoury details of the private lives of at least one prominent politician in the next week.

Reports that *Hustler* was preparing an exposé on the man nominated to become the next Speaker of the House of Representatives, Bob Livingston, led to his admission of extramarital affairs and his subsequent resignation.

Mr Livingston used his decision to step down - strongly encouraged, it was reported, by the right wing of his party - to draw the contrast between his own attitude and that of Mr Clinton, who had declared, just days before, that resignation had "never crossed my mind".

While the White House and media have long tried to avoid discussion of this and other salacious and generally uncorroborated details about politicians' private lives, the Lewinsky case, with its politics, sex, law and lies, forced the lifting of at least some of the covers.

The Star's latest story was reported - before it had even been considered for publication - on the Internet by the anti-

establishment "gossip", Matt Drudge. Mr Drudge, who is pilloried by the media establishment and infuriates it when, as during the Lewinsky saga, his "rumours" prove true, also peddled the story on his half-hour talkshow on Rupert Murdoch's Fox News. The story was also printed on Sunday in the tabloid *New York Post*. Fox took the opportunity, in several of its shows, to review lurking accusations - all denied - that the Clinton camp may have intimidated a number of women to be silent about past encounters with Mr Clinton.

As with the Flowers story and, initially, the Monica Lewinsky disclosures, the updated version of the Danny Williams rumour was shunned by the mainstream media. It was, however, taken up enthusiastically by radio talkshows, which found callers wanting to talk about nothing else, and on the Internet. From Wednesday, the mainstream could no longer ignore it and used a White House refusal to broach the rumour, even to rebut it, to report the story that "everyone is talking about" but the media had "declined to publish".

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Members of the public line up outside the Capitol for tickets to Mr Clinton's impeachment trial

Steely
eyes
await the
evidence

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

THE US CONGRESS took only a few highly choreographed minutes yesterday to launch the trial of William Jefferson Clinton.

The Capitol building was designed to create a sense of awe and dignity with its echoing, high-ceilinged stone corridors, gilt finishings, stone pillars and wood paneling.

At 10am, flanked by security guards and armed officers of the Capitol Hill police, the 13 managers of the impeachment trial paraded from the House of Representatives to the Senate.

Steely-eyed and stony-faced, the executioners marched past confused Japanese tourists and the massed ranks of the international press into the chamber of the Senate, where they stood stiffly, like new boys on their first day in school.

They were greeted by the avuncular Southern tones of 96-year-old Senator Strom Thurmond, who invited them into the well of the Senate.

Henry Hyde, the silver-haired chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, had brought the proceedings this far and this was his moment to launch the impeachment on to a larger and infinitely more formal stage. In a breathy mid-Western accent, sometimes stumbling, sometimes pausing for emphasis, always austere and pointed, he read in full the charges against the President as the senators sat silently at their wooden desks.

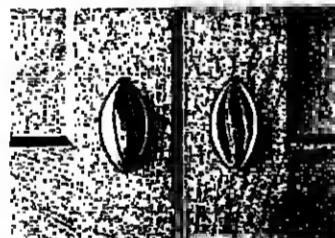
"It is the manager's request that the Senate take order for the trial," he concluded, and the Senate rose at 10.15am.

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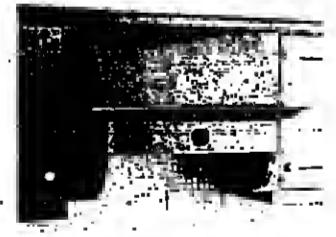
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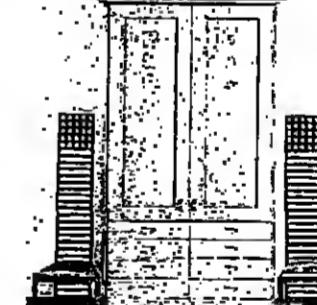


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Unscom head may quit over spy crisis



An Iraqi soldier looking out over central Baghdad from an anti-aircraft gun position yesterday

Reinhard Krause/Reuters

Cook tries to repair relations with Paris

ROBIN COOK, the Foreign Secretary, will try to narrow deep differences with France today over the future of United Nations weapons inspections in Iraq – and in the process rebuild a semblance of unity in Europe's strategy towards President Saddam Hussein.

The task, at breakfast talks in Paris with his French opposite number, Hubert Vedrine, was always going to be difficult, given the gap between France's advocacy of a "soft" regime of inspections and of an early lifting of sanctions and Britain's dogged insistence that sanctions stay in place and the Unscom mission continues its work.

But now it has become harder still after the dispute over allegations that Unscom was secretly used by Washington to spy against President Saddam. Not only do these claims make it more unlikely than ever that UN inspectors will set foot again on Iraqi soil; they also seem bound to reignite French suspicions about Richard Butler, the Unscom chief who is accused of being the United States' prime cat's-paw in the

By RUPERT CORNWELL

alleged espionage operations, and its complaint that the US – with Britain in tow – is riding roughshod over the world body.

The air strikes resolved nothing," the French President, Jacques Chirac, told foreign ambassadors in Paris yesterday, in barely veiled criticism of Washington's high-handedness. "The UN Security Council should regain its full role... the main lesson of this crisis is that no one should weaken the council, because it cannot be replaced."

British officials are sympathetic to suggestions that participation in the US-led air strikes and its determination to pile on the pressure against President Saddam afterwards have left Britain isolated among its European partners. They admit only to "tactical differences" with the French – but even these will take some bridging.

In the longer term, Britain recognises that changes in Unscom as inevitable, given the practical realities. But, for the moment, it is staunchly behind

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HEAL'S WINTER SALE

NOW ON



Yemenis implicate Britons in kidnap conspiracy

BY ERIC WATKINS

THE YEMENI authorities stoked up the diplomatic dispute with Britain over last month's hostage-taking - in which four Western tourists were killed - by alleging that the kidnap gang had sought the release of fellow conspirators who were British.

Analysts in London dismissed the claim, saying it was part of an effort to derail the investigation into the causes of the kidnap.

They had come from London "in co-ordination" with the kid-

nappers' leader, Abu Hassan. Local sources named a Birmingham resident as one of the people arrested.

The man, about 30 years old, was born in South Yemen and came to Britain as an infant.

Relatives yesterday dismissed claims of his involvement with terrorists, saying he had gone to Yemen in July to study Arabic and was accompanied by his mother.

"The family was notified of his arrest two to three weeks ago," one relative said.

Yesterday the man's father left for Yemen to visit him in prison.

Other sources said sympathisers would petition the Yemeni authorities for the man's release.

The Foreign Office was notified earlier this week that six British citizens had been arrested in Yemen and is seeking

to confirm the claims. "If they are British citizens, then we are obliged to provide consular assistance," a spokesman said.

Analysts dismissed General Arab's claims, calling them tactics to divert attention from the main inquiry into the kidnap.

"The Yemeni government is now attempting to implicate Britain in the kidnapping of its own tourists," one said.

"It is a diplomatic offensive,

and one the Yemenis are determined to win."

Four Scotland Yard detectives travelled to Yemen over the weekend to assist Yemeni authorities with their investigations.

But two of them were told on Tuesday to leave Aden, where they were investigating the deaths.

The Foreign Office later said there had been an administrative glitch over the matter and the request would be granted.

The kidnappers are believed to be members of Islamic Jihad, a militant group in south Yemen.

The government had been moving against its leaders after members of the group tried to force Yemeni villagers to conform to strict Islamic law.

They also said they were avenging the air strikes of 16 December to 19 December by American and British forces on Iraq.

UK 'spy' escapes Congo prison

BY ALEX DUVAL SMITH

A BRITISH man, held in a Congo Republic jail for two months, was reported last night to be among 40 prisoners who took part in an impromptu break-out in the capital, Brazzaville.

The Foreign Office confirmed that the unnamed Briton had been linked to the break-out, in the Mikalou district of the city.

Details of the allegations against the man are not known, but according to a report - which the Foreign Office would not confirm last night - he had been arrested on suspicion of spying.

The Congolese Observatory of Human Rights (OCDH) said it had visited the man during his detention.

The Foreign Office spokesman said yesterday: "We can confirm that a British man was involved in the escape when Brazzaville prison came under mob attack."

The man, who has contacted the British honorary consul in Brazzaville, was detained without charge on November 6," added the spokesman.

The break-out reportedly happened on Wednesday as panic ensued when police officers tried to disarm a soldier at the prison, who was killed in the exchange.

Congolese soldiers have been banned from carrying weapons in certain parts of Brazzaville since street battles and looting broke out in the city in December.

Prisoners are being held in police cells because Brazzaville's prison was destroyed in the 1997 civil war.

The Congo Republic borders on the huge Democratic Republic of Congo across the Congo river, which is embroiled in a civil war over control of its mineral-rich territory.

The government of the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has barred a UN investigation into alleged massacres by its own troops, yesterday called for an investigation into the reported massacre of 500 civilians by rebel forces.



United Nations staff being flown out of Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital, as fighting raged for control of the city. Civilians have been urged to stay indoors to avoid being shot

AFP

Sierra Leone seeks rebel truce

SIERRA LEONE'S President, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, said yesterday he was in talks with the detained rebel leader Foday Sankoh on a ceasefire in fighting in the capital, Freetown.

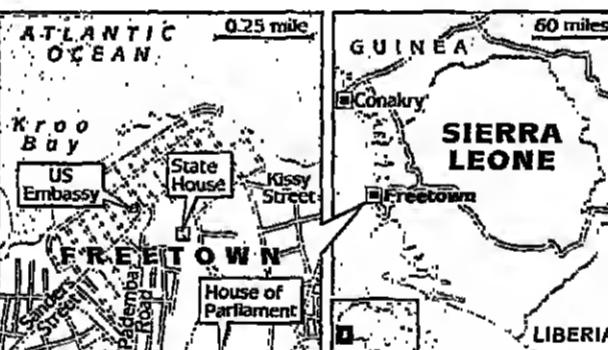
Mr Kabbah also told a news conference at Freetown's Lungi airport town, where he is sheltering from the fighting, that he was prepared to free Sankoh, who is under a death sentence for treason, if he agreed to certain conditions. One of the main rebel demands has been for the release of their leader. A rebel commander, Sam Bockarie, said on Wednesday they would continue their offensive until Foday Sankoh was freed.

Amid confusion about the success of the Nigerian-led Ecomog forces' drive against the rebellion, Robin Cook, the

Foreign Secretary, accused neighbouring Liberia of backing efforts to topple Mr Kabbah. "We believe there is credible evidence that they are supporting the rebels. If they are giving any support that must stop immediately," Mr Cook told BBC Radio 4 that 50 Britons remained in Sierra Leone.

In his radio interview, Mr Cook said Britain had invested £30m in Sierra Leone since President Kabbah was restored to power.

People in Freetown said by telephone that Ecomog troops appeared to have taken State House and the main prison, which was captured by rebels on Wednesday. Ecomog troops,



backed by jets, were also reported to be advancing on the rebel-held Eastend district of Freetown.

Earlier this week Britain committed £1m of financial and logistical support to Ecomog, the West African peace and intervention force, for its work in Sierra Leone. Last year the Sandline British mercenary company played a role in reinstating President Kabbah, who was ousted by rebels under Major Johnny Paul Koroma in May 1997. Sandline's shipments of arms and personnel were

to avoid being shot by Ecomog. In Britain, a Foreign Office spokesman said Mr Cook had written to the Liberian president, Charles Taylor, a week ago about his purported support for the rebels, warning that Liberia would "damage its standing

with international financial institutions" unless it ended its support.

On 25 December Liberia denied accusations by the United States and six West African nations that it was aiding the rebels but confirmed it knew of

mercenaries helping the rebels.

Mr Taylor has accused President Kabbah's government of hiding rebels trying to oust him. But in the past year, there have been extensive reports of torture and other human rights abuses and atrocities by the Sierra Leonean rebels camped in the north of the country.

Meanwhile Kayode Fayanmi, director of the Centre for Democracy and Development think-tank, which is based in London, said yesterday that the Nigerian army does not have the option of cutting and running after sending nearly a fifth of its ground troops to defend the elected President Kabbah.

"Ecomog cannot let this lie

low for its own integrity. Nigeria cannot let it," he said. "I

think the response on the part of the Nigerians for now would be to send in more battalions - but this is a no-win situation for them. Even if they do this with a political agenda."

Military analysts blame the Sierra Leone debacle on inadequate motivation, poor intelligence and an even poorer response to intelligence because of the belief that a ragtag bunch of bush fighters could not outgun a force of at least 10,000 backed by air power.

"Officers were more concerned about personal perks than they were about the rebel threat. The men were complaining they were not being paid and had no idea what they were supposed to die for," said one analyst.

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British mine worker among four killed in Angola attack

BY PAUL LASHMAR

A BRITISH diamond worker and three of his colleagues have been killed in an ambush in northern Angola.

The attack in which Patrick Bergin, 33, from Helston, Cornwall, died, comes two weeks after 23 people died in the crashes of two United Nations planes.

Wednesday's attack, blamed on Unita rebels, also claimed the lives of a Brazilian civil engineer, Mario Trepechio, and two Angolan guards.

The men, who were employed in Cunene, a mine some 500km east of the capital, Luanda, were employed by Ashton Mining, an Australian company. At the time of the ambush, the men were travelling from

African country's diamond mines. Unita (the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) currently has the upper hand in a renewed struggle that has destroyed a UN peace plan to end a 30-year civil war.

In a rare gesture to the UN, Unita yesterday said it would co-operate with the search for the wreckage of the UN planes, which went down on 26 December and on Saturday.

Last November, Unita forces attacked the Yetembe mine partly owned by the Canadian company DiamondWorks.

A number of people were killed, including two Britons. Four people were captured, in-

cluding a 26-year-old English geologist, Jason Pope.

Unita has, until now, maintained - despite UN protests to the contrary - that it has yet to receive a formal request for assistance from the world body in finding the two planes.

The rebel movement and the Angolan government, which on Wednesday pledged its full support in a rescue mission, have accused each other of shooting down the two C-130 transport aircraft.

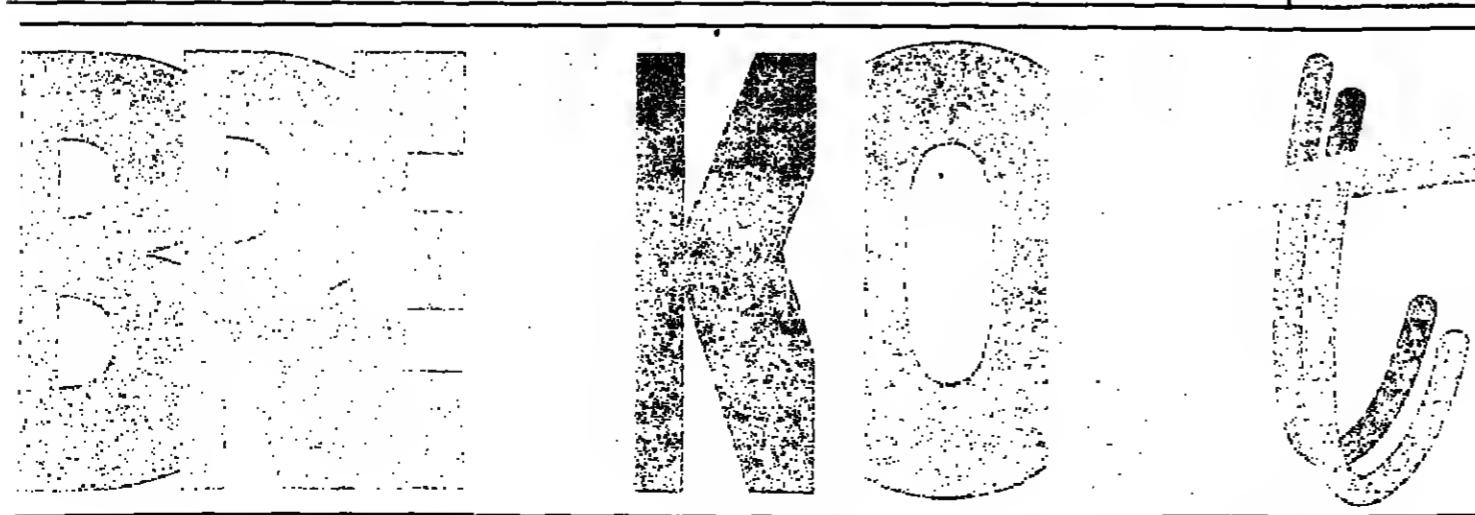
UN officials said the first UN-leased Hercules to crash had 14 passengers and crew on board. The second plane was carrying nine passengers and four crew.

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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

Lehman Bros profits slump 60%

 LEHMAN BROTHERS, the Wall Street investment house that has been the subject of repeated takeover speculation, saw profits slump 60 per cent to \$74m in the fourth quarter of last year, compared with \$185m in the last three months of 1997. The sharply lower figure, announced by chairman Richard Fuld (pictured) compares adversely with the \$879m notched up in the period by US rival Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, 9 per cent ahead of the year before.

The discrepancy is due in part to Morgan Stanley's lower exposure to both emerging markets and to fixed income, areas where Lehman continues to be hit hard. Analysts point out that both houses reported profits above expectations, reflecting the sharp recovery in stock markets after September's collapse.

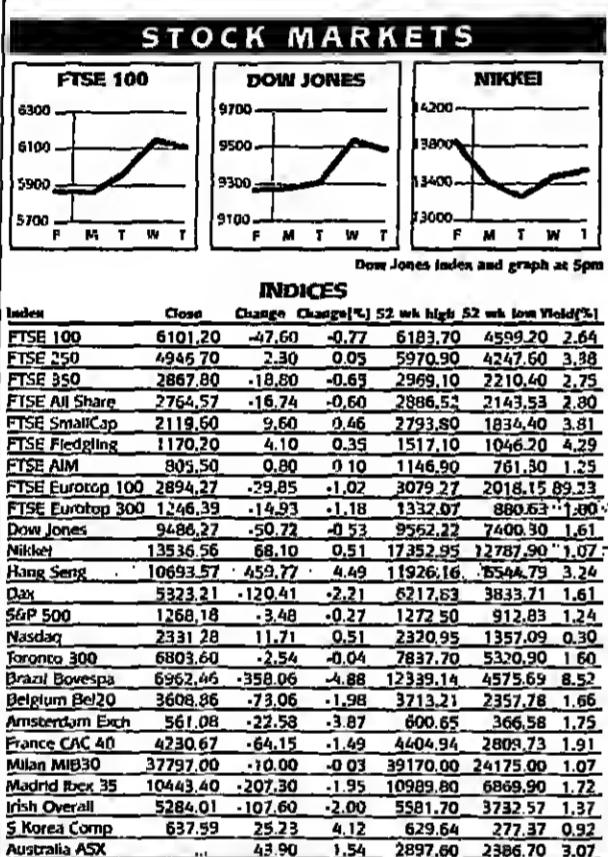
Insurer announces cut in bonuses

SCOTTISH PROVIDENT, the life insurer, yesterday announced a cut in bonuses to policyholders that will cause payouts on typical 25-year endowments to fall by 5.7 per cent. Interest on unitised with-profits policies will fall from 6.75 to 6.25 per cent. Barry Rose, the chief executive, said the cuts were due to a new environment of lower inflation and interest rates.

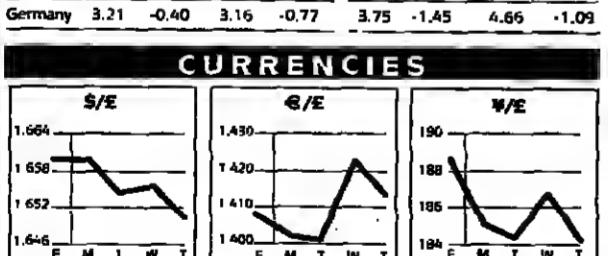
Sims Food completes review

SIMS FOOD Group, the beefburger manufacturer almost wiped out by the BSE crisis, has announced the completion of its strategic review alongside a trading update saying profits should exceed market expectations.

The completion of the review will see chief executive, Stephen Collier, leave in March, having overseen the sale of the fresh retail meats business. Sims will focus on fast food, involving the closure of its Milton Keynes head office with functions moving to the manufacturing site in Hull. Annual cost savings are expected to be £500,000. Paul Harrison has been appointed managing director.



Index	3 month	Yr chg	1 year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	6.03	-1.54	5.52	-2.04	4.28	-1.82	4.28	-1.76
US	5.06	-0.63	5.09	-0.66	4.77	-0.06	5.23	-0.16
Japan	0.54	-0.28	0.56	-0.20	1.84	-0.02	2.58	0.10
Germany	3.21	-0.40	3.16	-0.77	3.75	-1.45	4.66	-1.09



Country	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6501	+0.036	1.6246
Euro	1.4130	-1.13c	1.4079
Yen	184.05	-2.82	214.94
£ Index	99.00	-0.20	104.50

OTHER INDICATORS	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	11.28	0.11	15.06
Gold (\$)	289.85	1.65	283.23
Silver (\$)	5.29	0.14	6.09

www.bloomberg.com/uk

SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

Australia (\$)	2.5395	Mexican (nuevo peso)	14.71
Austria (schillings)	18.99	Netherlands (guilder)	3.0428
Belgium (francs)	55.83	New Zealand (\$)	2.9371
Canada (\$)	2.4394	Norway (krone)	12.04
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8003	Portugal (escudos)	275.61
Denmark (kroner)	10.34	Saudi Arabia (rials)	6.0349
Finland (markka)	8.2392	Singapore (\$)	2.6454
France (francs)	9.0712	Spain (pesetas)	229.76
Germany (marks)	2.7144	South Africa (rands)	9.1071
Greece (drachma)	449.18	Sweden (krona)	12.91
Hong Kong (\$)	12.44	Switzerland (francs)	2.7449
Ireland (pounds)	1.0864	Thailand (bahts)	55.33
Indian (rupees)	83.31	Turkey (lira)	5057.19
Israel (shekels)	S.4069	USA (\$)	1.6179
Italy (lira)	2688		
Japan (yen)	179.55		
Malaysia (ringgits)	6.0351		
Malta (lira)	0.5064		

Rates for indicative purposes only

Source: Thomas Cook

Quarter-point cut leaves room for more next month

THE BANK of England cut interest rates by a quarter-point to 6 per cent yesterday, the fourth reduction in as many months. But business and unions alike reacted by demanding more.

Kate Barker, chief economist at the Confederation of British Industry, said: "Further interest-rate cuts will be needed to ward off the danger of outright recession."

John Monks, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress, agreed with the employers' organisation. "Interest rates are still significantly higher than in the Eurozone," he said, calling for

BY DIANE COYLE
AND NIGEL COPE

a reduction to 4 per cent by the middle of the year.

Most City analysts concluded yesterday that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) would opt for another reduction next month. The latest figures and surveys suggest that the UK economic slowdown is spreading beyond the hard-hat manufacturing sector. By early next month there will be clearer evidence of how the economy performed in the final quarter of last year.

"They are right to move cautiously, but rates will trend

down to 5 per cent by the middle of the year," said Paul Turnbull, UK economist at Merrill Lynch. David Walton at Goldman Sachs said: "The MPC can head off the risk of recession."

There would be no inflationary danger in cutting rates further at present, he said.

In its statement, the Bank cited continuing economic slowdown, signs that the jobs market had stopped tightening, and the possibility of an import-led recovery.

The warning came as a leading Japanese car importer claimed that figures for 1998, which show the second-highest new car sales on record, had been "massaged" by as much as 400,000 sales.

According to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), new car sales reached 2,247,402 in 1998 – a 3.5 per cent increase on the previous year and the highest figure since the peak year of 1989.

But Mitsubishi Motors estimated that 400,000 of these were "pre-registrations" – where dealers register the cars as sold before they have customers. If these were excluded the real sales figure for 1998 would be nearer £1.85 million.

Roger King, acting chief executive of the SMMT, defended the figures, saying that the year had ended with a sales flurry caused by successive interest-rate reductions, the arrival of new models and the deals on offer to customers.

December sales were 14 per cent up on the previous year. However, there was no respite for the embattled Rover car group, which saw its share of the UK market slip to a new low

of just 6.6 per cent. Over the year, Rover only just managed to cling on to third place with a market share of 8.6 per cent, fractionally ahead of Renault and Peugeot.

Most foreign manufacturers made inroads into the UK market, helped by the strength of sterling, which has made imported cars cheaper. Last year the share of new car sales

footwear, leather goods, groceries and books, but there were sharp falls in big-ticket items such as furniture and cars.

Alastair Eperon, chairman of the CBI's distributive trades panel, said continued growth would depend on the success of the January sales, and that further interest-rate cuts were needed. The British Retail Consortium echoed this – Ann Robinson, its director general, said: "The hope is that a further reduction in mortgage costs will put consumers in a better frame of mind and encourage them to start spending."

Littlewoods added to the

high-street gloom when it reported a slowdown in retail sales growth over Christmas. Underlying sales in the nine weeks to 2 January increased by just 2 per cent compared with the 8 per cent achieved in the first half of the 1998/99 financial year.

There was better news elsewhere, with Electronics Boutiques, the computer games retailer, reporting strong underlying sales growth. Clinton Cards, the greeting cards retailer, reported buoyant

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

THE MOTOR industry warned yesterday that new car sales could fall by as much as 10 per cent this year as recession and uncertainty take their toll on garage forecourts.

The warning came as a leading Japanese car importer claimed that figures for 1998, which show the second-highest new car sales on record, had been "massaged" by as much as 4

Will the euro save our car industry?

IF THE pound behaves as it is supposed to this year, and gently rolls downhill as the euro gathers momentum, then the domestic car industry, for one, will not be complaining. The damage wrought by the strength of sterling is graphically illustrated in the annual car sales figures for 1998 out yesterday.

Rover, which for all its faults remains Britain's leading car producer, saw its share of the market fall to a new low of 6.6 per cent for December and 8.6 per cent for the year. Admittedly, the company has been the architect of many of its own problems. Its UK dealer network is crying out for products to sell because of the inspired strategy of phasing out some models before there were new ones to replace them. And by its own admission, Rover comprehensively failed to get to grips with the vicious marketing wars that broke out on the forecourts last year until it was too late.

But Rover is not alone in feeling the pinch. In December imports accounted for seven in ten new cars sold in Britain. Over the year as a whole, imports have never taken a bigger market share. That suggests some of the pain is also being felt in the British factories of Ford, Vauxhall and even the Japanese manufacturers.

In part the strength of imports is explained by the blurring of the line between fleet and private purchases. The big "buy British" fleet deals are becoming a thing of the past. Instead, the user-chooser policies being adopted by more and more companies tend to favour lower-volume importers.

But the exchange rate advantage importers have enjoyed must be a considerable factor, giving them the luxury of either buying market share with cheaper prices or pocketing a bigger profit. The British car industry has responded manfully with an export drive. Last year

Rover's European sales rose by 7 per cent, while overseas deliveries helped Nissan's Sunderland car plant hit record production levels. But at current exchange rates, neither is making any money.

The 1998 figures also highlight a wider trend, which is that the market is becoming more and more fragmented. Not that long ago Ford, Vauxhall and Rover accounted for 80 per cent of all UK sales. Now that figure is down below 40 per cent as the likes of Renault, Peugeot and Volkswagen encroach on their territory.

The much-vaunted consolidation that is supposedly ready to sweep the car industry could reverse that process of fragmentation. Those driving the process are likely to be the big battalions of Ford and General Motors, which are better insulated than most against the vagaries of exchange rates by their sheer size and geographic spread.

Barclays/B&C

IS BARCLAYS just accident prone, or is there something seriously wrong? Just as things were beginning to settle after Martin Taylor's sensational departure as chief ex-

ecutive, up pops another nasty surprise – an unprovided-for liability in respect of the collapse of British & Commonwealth.

This went entirely unmentioned at the time of Mr Taylor's walkout, even though the out-of-court settlement announced yesterday was already under active negotiation by the Centre for Dispute Resolution. The £1.9m pre-tax profit the bank then said it expected to make for last calendar year took no account of this new liability.

We should perhaps be too hard on Barclays for holding back. The B&C collapse was an awfully long time ago, and the deal that caused it, the acquisition of the semi-fraudulent Atlantic Computers, even longer. What's more, it was well known that legal proceedings against Barclays in connection with this acquisition were still outstanding.

And in any case, companies

tend as a matter of course not to provide for legal cases against them, since to do so might be seen as a partial admission of liability. All the same, this is an alarmingly large sum of money unexpectedly to kiss goodbye to, even if going to court might have been to risk more. Investors can only pray that it marks

the final piece of bad news to come crawling out of the woodwork.

Markets/rates

COULD LONDON be the surprise outperformer in Western stock markets this year? This column has not been an unmitigated bull of UK equities for some while now, but assuming there is no general crash in Western stock markets, London seems to offer surprisingly good value to others.

One of the reasons for this is that there is still significant scope for reduction in British short-term interest rates. Even after yesterday's quarter-point cut, taking the four-month fall to 1.5 basis points, they are still double the level that rules in Euroland and significantly above the US Fed funds rate. Neither of these two economic regions can realistically cut interest rates by much more. In Britain, by contrast, there is still plenty of leeway for cheaper money.

Obviously this is one of the reasons why British equities are generally more poorly valued than their US and European counterparts – interest rates are much higher and as a consequence, the pound is still painfully high too. But by the same token, this also provides potential for catch-up as rates fall.

Another is that the British economy is almost certainly not in as bad a shape as many of the headlines would suggest. Even the most bearish of forecasters are predicting only a shallow recession – perhaps three quarters of marginally declining growth. By the third quarter of this year, by which time interest rates should be down to 5 per cent or less, we could be pulling out of it. If the Government takes the plunge and makes the policy adjustments necessary to take Britain into the single currency, then there will be even more of a following wind for UK equities.

The big proviso is how Wall Street behaves. If America crashes, then all bets are off, and there are still plenty of people around who believe it might. To the traditional reason for thinking this – that US stock markets have become an overvalued speculative bubble – was last year added the possibility that the Far East would plunge the world, including the US, into economic recession. So far, this hasn't happened. Now there's another

potential bogey on the horizon – that the world, and particularly Japan, is about to stop financing the US current account deficit.

There is already some evidence of capital withdrawal from the US in the sudden about-turn of the dollar against the yen. Given the extent to which the US has begun to live on borrowed money, as well as the wealth effect of the booming stock market, this is obviously a very real threat to the general health of the US economy.

Even so, the idea that the US is about to become the latest victim of the "wrecking ball" tendencies of global capital markets, rather in the same way as the Pacific Rim economies, is not a very plausible one. The US economic miracle may seem a little more fragile right now than it has done, but the alternatives – sluggish Europe and recessionary Japan – hardly look any better.

Bear markets and crashes generally need a cause, and while the near-collapse of Long-Term Capital Management came perilously close to providing one, the pin capable of pricking the bubble just doesn't seem to be there right now. So maybe London equities can expect another good year after all.



OUTLOOK

News Analysis: The harsh truth for 110 Liffe traders is that the rules don't protect them – and they're mad as hell

Brutal lesson behind the Griffin failure

FOR THE 110 self-employed Liffe futures traders who have been put out of business by the collapse on Christmas Eve of Griffin, the Chicago-based futures broker, at the hands of sole trader John Ho Park, there is only one overriding, very simple issue – someone has stolen their money, and it is the job of the regulators to get it back.

But no one is prepared to accept the blame for their plight and to bail them out. And the traders – known as locals – are mad as hell.

Yesterday the two sides went head-to-head at a meeting between the officials of the brand new City regulator, the Financial Services Authority (FSA), and the rough and ready locals from the Liffe trading floor. It could not exactly be called a meeting of minds.

Many expected to be given back their money on the spot. They were not best pleased to be told that it would be at least six weeks before they got anything back, that the most they could expect for the time being was 50 per cent of what they

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

lost, and that the share-out could be held up by haggling over exactly how much each trader was owed.

The news led to a chorus of boozing and heckling and some choice language, above which the two FSA officials on the top table, Michael Folgar and Lindsay Thomas, struggled to make themselves heard.

The traders had little time either for Finbarr O'Connell, the accountant from Grant Thornton who just the day before had been appointed as liquidator to wind up Griffin, or for Andrew Lamb of the London Clearing House, who struggled to explain to the traders why the £150m default fund could not be tapped to help fund them.

When John Ho Park, a skinny, bright, studious Cambridge-educated trader of Korean origin, took a spectacularly disastrous bet on the German futures market just before Christmas, he set in motion a train of events that has shown

up a gaping loophole in the rules.

MeesPierson, the Dutch-owned bank, discovered that Griffin, which cleared for Mr Park on the Eurex exchange through which Mr Park did his deals, did not have the money to honour his trades.

The bank then took the £3m it had in Griffin's account to cover his liabilities. Unfortunately for the other Griffin traders, most of that money had been deposited to cover their own dealings, as well as those of Mr Park, and there was not enough money to cover both.

When the traders put their money into Griffin, the money went into what is called a segregated account. They thought that meant it was safe if the firm went down. It was. But what they did not realise was that while the money was ring-fenced from the firm's own money, the firm did not ring-fence one client's funds from another, nor was it obliged to.

To have had that extra protection they would have had to ask for individually designated accounts, which would have cost more to run.

It is hard not to be moved by the individual plight of this handful of traders. They may not be Durham miners, but they are not rich either. Some had just £15,000 to play with. Others had been given pots of between £10,000 and £20,000 by friends or associates to trade with on their behalf, and who are not going to get their money back.

Many have children and homes, while some have just quit their jobs to set up on their own and have put all their sav-

ings into the business. They are worried, angry and confused.

Nick Durlach, the chairman of the Securities and Futures Authority, incensed the locals when he said at the weekend that they were "experts" who should have been aware of the rules, and that the risk they were running by not having designated accounts was a risk no different from the other risks a trader takes.

One angry trader said yesterday: "They say we should have known about the difference between segregated funds and designated funds."

How come then no one had designated accounts – even people who had been in the market for 17 years? The rules say they

have a duty of care towards us. Clearly they have failed.

Some traders are suicidal. Following yesterday's meeting, many have simply given up and started to look for other jobs.

Ever since the collapse, no one has properly answered the question as to why Griffin Trading, a medium-sized Chicago futures broker of distinguished parentage, should go under for just £2.25m. Roger and Tex Griffin are men of substantial means. One of their antecedents served on the Chicago Board of Trade. The fact that the chief financial officer, Stephen Szach, it has emerged, left the firm last week, allegedly leaving a £1.5m (£300,000) to £2m black hole in

his wake, may partly explain the plight. The cause, so the story goes, was his own unauthorised dealing on the New York stock exchange. Griffin's lawyer, Ty Fahner of the Chicago law firm Meyer Brown & Platt, has declined to return calls.

There is a wider issue at stake here. For years the locals have been the lifeblood of the London market. But over the past few years their role has been increasingly under threat. London continued to rely on open outcry trading long after rivals such as Frankfurt's Eurex went electronic. Now, after losing its prime selling point, the German government bond future, back to Frankfurt, Liffe is seeking belatedly to move on to cheaper screen-based systems. But it may be too late. As one trader put it:

"The bond has already gone to Frankfurt. Liffe wants to stay in the game with the euro interest futures, but there is no way the Europeans are going to let them have that. It will go to Frankfurt, too."

Griffin and a number of smaller clearers provided a home for the floor traders displaced by the closure of Liffe's open outcry pits. The Griffin collapse will speed up the decline of the locals as a feature of the market. The brutal lesson of the last week is that the rules do not protect them, only size does. In a world of global

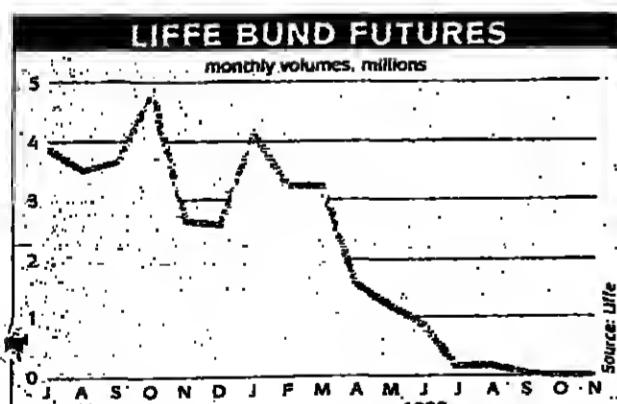
megabanks, being a sole trader is a lonely position indeed.

Liffe is now pressing to close the loophole through which the Griffin traders have fallen. But their support does not run as far as doing anything concrete to solve the immediate problem for the traders, which is – where they can get their hands on the money they need to stay afloat?

As one local said: "We are the lifeblood of the market. I have paid my dues for seven years. They have milked us dry. The traders hit by Griffin account for 10 per cent of the local capacity. We have been out of commission throughout the launch of the euro. Their attitude is disgusting."



Traders leave the FSA after yesterday's ill-tempered meeting, where they were told of at least a six-week wait for payment. Mark Chilvers



Brazilian infighting puts the skids under world markets

BY DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

Frankfurt share prices fell by 2 per cent, partly reversing their near-9 per cent gain since the launch of the euro.

In Rio de Janeiro, the Bovespa share index had dropped 6 per cent by lunchtime. Emerging market bond prices fell across the board, with investors still bearing the scars of Russia's debt default last summer.

The markets were reacting to the announcement by Itamar Franco, new governor of the state of Minas Gerais and a likely future presidential candidate, that the state would halt interest payments on its debt to the federal government for 90 days. Although the statement was interpreted as posturing for

domestic political purposes, the state is due to make payments on Eurobonds worth \$200m within the 90-day period.

The Brazilian government, led by President Fernando Cardoso, is already mired in a mammoth political battle to push budget cuts through the congress. The lower house has already delivered one blow to the international rescue package: last month it rejected the first part of the government's plans to get its budget deficit under control.

As a result, capital flows out of the country accelerated to reach more than \$5bn in December, surpassing the funds the IMF had pumped in during the month. Until yesterday the outflows had slowed down since the start of the new year, but an

alysts are sceptical that the deficit reduction package will be passed.

If the government does not win the political battle, further tranches of the international loans could be at risk.

"It's a close call," said David Luhin at HSBC Markets. He said investors might not be prepared to wait as long as Brazil needed to see the fruits of its economic reforms.

"The market seems bordering on the complacent," said Paul McNamara, emerging markets economist at Julius Baer Investments in London.

"A lot of people appear to have taken leave of their senses in the way money is continuing to pour into some of these emerging markets," said Mr McNamara.

Girobank

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SPORT

New faces for 1999: Practice makes perfect at The Valley while the 'new Bryan Robson' emerges at Gresty Road



Peter Jay

School's out: Scott Parker's English and mathematics worries are over now that he has carved out a career in professional football with Charlton Athletic

Johnson in with the right Crewe

A midfield dynamo from Dawlish is Dario Gradi's latest promising youngster. By Guy Hodgson

RARELY IS a disgraced and beaten player also the outstanding force for good in a match but Crewe Alexandra's visit to Sheffield United last autumn provided an exception. One youngster was so outstanding that Bramall Lane's stands took on the appearance of a swarm of butterflies as people flicked through the programme to find out who he was.

Seth Johnson was the name they were searching for and one that so interested the referee he took it down twice, dismissing the midfield player for two bookable offences. On that night he had been the victim of his own enthusiasm as he tried to match the physical Blades with force of his own. Nevertheless, the verve of his performance as he buccaneered around midfield rebuffing the red and white shirts was reminiscent of a young Bryan Robson.

It is a comparison that has struck a chord with other observers, too, and Liverpool, Newcastle United and Leicester City have made enquiries about the 19-year-old. Stockport County made a bid of £1m in October, an offer scornfully dismissed from Gresty Road as Johnson made his England Under-21 debut two days later.

Not that Johnson's manager, Dario Gradi, could be accused of over-estimating the value of his charges. Crewe have to be sold to survive but they will not let anyone go if they are not going to be in a Premiership first team. The club has to be ready and so has the player.

"He has to work hard just to keep his place in my team," Gradi said, dismissively, but then he added: "He has the potential to be as good as any of the players who have been here." As Gradi's former pupils include David Platt, Rob Jones and Neil Lennon, that is praise.

Johnson was first spotted by Gradi when Crewe were on a pre-season tour of Devon and Cornwall. A match with Dawlish Generals had been cancelled but when an 11-year-old, who had not heard the game was off, turned up he was allowed to train with the first team squad. Contact was maintained.

"I've taken teams to Dawlish since my time at Chelsea. I thought it would be nice if we allowed one of their boys to come up with Crewe for a week. I didn't expect much, but Seth proved better than we thought."

It was Johnson's enthusiasm that struck Gradi first, but there was more than mere eagerness to learn and he made his debut at 17, scored on his debut for England Under-18s (the winner in a 3-2 victory over Russia) and came on as a 72nd-minute substitute for the England Under-21s against Luxembourg last autumn. It is already an impressive CV.

Johnson has played in a variety of positions for Crewe and Gradi admits he is not sure where he will end up. "We try to develop the kids here as all-round footballers and not pigeon hole them. Seth has the ability to become a good midfield player but he's just starting."

And the next Robson? "Bryan is the best midfield player Britain has produced in my time," Gradi replied, "so it is not fair to make a comparison. Seth can create goals and stop goals but he doesn't score goals like Robson did when he was young."

Once that ingredient is added Johnson will almost certainly be sold to keep Crewe afloat. "I haven't a clue when that will be," Gradi said, "but it won't be until he has gone up a level from where he is now. It's up to him to work hard."

The likelihood is the labour will be worth it.



TV star: Scott Parker first came to prominence five years ago when he showed off his skills in a McDonald's commercial

Practice just perfect for Parker

Art imitates life as a schoolboy steps up from a television commercial to a career in professional football. By Steve Tongue

THE ROOM at Charlton Athletic's training ground was marked "Homework" and Scott Parker, a member of the club's productive and much-praised school of excellence, often used to sit in it trying to concentrate on maths or English, rather than dreaming about becoming a professional footballer. This week, for the first time, he was able to relax there and reflect on having started a first-team game. Touchingly, he seemed rather thrilled by it all. "When I was a little boy sitting in the crowd, watching the teams run out, I just dreamt of it," he said. At half past one last Saturday, with half-a-dozen appearances as a substitute behind him, the dream came true as he was given the nod to start Charlton's FA Cup tie at Blackbourn on the right of midfield. He earned good reviews before succumbing to cramp late in the game as familiar defensive howlers undermined his team.

Now aged 18, Parker was old enough and wise enough to play things simple; no juggling the ball on his thigh or flicking it up and catching it on the back of his neck, which

were the sort of tricks that had first brought him to the nation's attention five years ago, in a televised advertisement for McDonald's. These days he seems a little embarrassed by it all, but has no need to be. In coming through the audition from 50 of his contemporaries, he demonstrated qualities of skill under pressure, a sunny disposition and commendable patience in his first exposure to the media - it took six hours of filming in a back garden in Friern Barnet to produce the 30-second commercial.

The theme, according to the advertising agency, was that practice makes perfect. The 13-year-old took it to heart, and within a year or so was determined that a football career was for him. Remarkably, he had been training with Charlton since the age of eight and would stay with them despite the efforts of the club he supported, Tottenham, and

others, to prise him away. At the FA National School at Lilleshall, he shared facilities with older northern boys such as Michael Owen ("a really good lad"), Wes Brown and Michael Ball and, while others of his own age grew homesick, Parker grew up. Highly regarded by the England hierarchy, he played international football at under-15 and under-16 level and has now graduated to the under-18 side, preparing for their Uefa youth championship qualifying group in March.

Charlton have long been aware of what a potentially good player they had and knew that being able to offer early opportunities of first-team football, as they had done to youngsters such as Robert Lee and Lee Bowyer, was a powerful incentive for him to stay with them.

The point was dramatically made early last season when left-back

Paul Konchesky, at 16, became the youngest player to turn out for the first-team, to be followed soon afterwards by Parker, as a substitute at Bury.

As manager Alan Curbishley acknowledges, both would have been given more opportunities this season had Charlton not won through the epic Wembley play-off final against Sunderland last May to earn an unlikely place in the Premiership. "If we hadn't gone up, I wouldn't have bought Neil Redfearn and Chris Powell, so there'd have been more openings," he said. "But Scott's come in last week and done very well. He needs to improve on his defensive responsibilities, and he can finish a bit better, given the positions he gets into. Apart from that, he's very comfortable, very tidy, a good passer, very fit and has a good football brain. We feel he's got a great chance and I think he feels he should be playing a bit more."

The chance will undoubtedly come, if not in this weekend's critical relegation set-to at Southampton, then before long. And he will have done his homework.

Poachers trying to flag down Pennant

A 15-year-old Notts County winger is bringing out the worst in the predatory instincts of Premiership clubs. By Nick Harris

THE YEAR was 1995 and David Brown and Matthew Wicks were the future of English football. Not only did they both appear to have long and glittering international careers ahead, they were also being coveted by Manchester United.

Brown, a prodigious 16-year-old Oldham Athletic striker, and Wicks, a 16-year-old Arsenal defender touted as one of the most promising players of his generation, were the subject of a controversial Football Association investigation into the "poaching" of young talent by predatory giants. Their stories are worth remembering amid the current controversy surrounding Notts County's 15-year-old winger, Jermaine Pennant, who is being valued at £2m by his club.

Pennant became the second youngest player ever to appear in the

FA Cup when he came on as a substitute during the 1-1 draw with Sheffield United at Bramall Lane last Saturday but he had already come to the attention of scouts after an appearance for England Schoolboys last year was televised by Sky.

The County manager, Sam Allardyce, has criticised the methods of the unnamed Premiership clubs who are threatening to approach from big clubs with a fixed compensation package with a bidder, they will not lose out. If, however, no club wants to meet their £2m settlement evaluation, the matter will be decided by tribunal.

"It is not blinding the player or his agent," Allardyce said. "But we have to do the best we can for Notts County, and that is letting people know

the boy is available. If we don't do something the case will finish up at a tribunal, and I have sat on enough of those to know how weighted they are in favour of Premiership clubs."

An FA spokesman said a similar situation had occurred when Gareth Barry moved from Brighton to Aston Villa having previously refused to sign a contract for the Seagulls approaching his 16th birthday. A tribunal last year ruled that Villa should pay immediate compensation of £150,000 to Brighton and set up a payments plan that will see them receive well over £1m - plus a share of any future transfer fee Villa receives for the player - if Barry fulfils his potential.

In most cases, astute clubs put such players on long contracts, as with 17-year-old striker Matthew Etherington's five-year package at Peterborough. Manager Barry Fry knows he will leave, but at least he will reap millions in the process.

As for David Brown and Matthew Wicks, Manchester United were forced to pay a £20,000 fine for luring the former and agreed to pay up to £400,000 depending on his future appearances at Old Trafford. He never played for the senior team and after a loan period at Third Division Hull City last season, signed a two-year contract for The Tigers. United were censured, but not fined, over their approach for Wicks, who returned to Arsenal, never made it to the senior side, and then joined First Division Crewe in the summer.

A 15-year-old for £2m, anyone?



Johnson: In Robson's mould

Honesty the best policy for Vaughan

A management training course has taught England A's young captain the benefit of the direct approach. By Adam Sreter

AS THE focus Down Under switches from five-day to one-day cricket with the forthcoming triangular series and its implications for this summer's World Cup, the England A team will be slipping off quietly from Heathrow tomorrow evening, bound for Zimbabwe and South Africa under the captaincy of Yorkshire's 24-year-old opener, Michael Vaughan.

When the squad for England's various touring parties were announced at the end of last season, the make-up of the A side raised a few eyebrows - average age 22 with just one player, Andy Flintoff, with Test experience. The selectors were to be praised for investing in youth, but had they gone a little far?

Vaughan's appointment, too, was unexpected. Five years after making his debut for his adopted county at the age of 18 against Lancashire, the

from his real home in Sheffield, ever since joining the Yorkshire Cricket Academy at the age of 16. While Sachin Tendulkar may have been the first overseas player to join Yorkshire, Vaughan is one of a small number of players born outside the Ridings to play for the county.

As a descendant of the Tyldesley brothers, Johnny and Ernest, his Lancashire cricketing pedigree seemed thorough but when his father's engineering job took the family to Sheffield from Eccles in Greater Manchester, Vaughan's red rose turned white straight away. "I'm a Sheffield lad," he said. "I love it. It's a great city. I was nine and a half when we moved and I didn't know much. I learnt all my tricks in Sheffield."

Despite playing for Yorkshire Schools from the age of 11, as a youngster and an avid Sheffield Wednesday fan Vaughan's ability as a footballer kept his cricketing development in check for a time. "Around the age of 12 or 13 I wasn't really the best of my age group," he said. "I used to bat seven and bowl a bit of away swing. Football was my true love then and I was probably doing a bit better at it. It wasn't until I got to about 15 that I really started to progress at cricket."

After captaining Yorkshire Under-16s and England Under-17s, the real breakthrough for Vaughan came in the summer of 1993 after playing for the England Under-19s against the West Indies. "I scored two centuries and people started talking about me playing for Yorkshire," he recalled. "The following week I got picked against Lancashire and just happened to score 60 and 90 on a difficult wicket and we won the game. All of a sudden, from one week being no one, everyone was talking about me. It was nice to have things said, but it didn't really get to me."

Vaughan's steady progress since then, scoring 1,000 runs every season except one when a wrist injury kept him out for seven weeks, appears to confirm a level-headed approach to his batting. "Last season was probably my best yet," he said. "With Martin Maxon retiring I had a bit more responsibility on my shoulders. I had to try and keep the innings together at the top of the order and I felt I did that reasonably well."

"I put a bit more pressure on myself, telling myself I was a good enough player to do that job and not let anyone else do it. I was trying not to be lazy, but be greedy and not give my wicket away as easily as I had in the past."

Some of Vaughan's spare time recently has been taken up by

county of his birth, and after two previous A tours Vaughan seemed to be at a crossroads in his career. One way led to Australia with the senior side, the other to oblivion for another winter.

Last season he averaged just under 41 in the Championship, but a lack of runs towards the end put him out of contention for the Ashes series so the invitation to complete his A team education was a very welcome one. "It was a bit of a surprise to get a third A tour and the captaincy as well, having never captained Yorkshire apart from one game last season against Cambridge," he said earlier this week. "But they've gone for young captains in the last two years so obviously they didn't want to change that."

Vaughan had just completed his final indoor net session at Headington before taking his leave of staff at the ground that has been home

attending an ECB management course. "You have to sit in a classroom from nine till six and I've not done that for a number of years," he said. "It's harder than batting all day, that's for sure."

What he has learnt about handling the media has probably contributed to his thoughtful and measured responses to all questions, something that will stand him in good stead over the coming weeks; it might not be long before the senior England side is looking for a new, young captain let alone a new opener.

"I'll be very positive all the time," Vaughan said, looking ahead to the challenge. "Whether we're training or playing, there will always be a very high intensity if possible. And we'll also make sure we're enjoying it, because I think players play their best cricket if they're enjoying themselves. I'll try and make them all

relaxed - I know it's pretty hard in tense situations, but I think with a relaxed mind and a relaxed body you will receive better responses from people."

"I'll no doubt have my weaknesses as a captain because it's a new thing for me, but I'm just going to be honest and I hope people are honest with me. If they think there's

a weakness in something I'm doing I hope they'll come and tell me and I'll try and put that right. Obviously I hope I'm going to do a great job and we're very successful, but my ambition is to get into the England team and to do that it's going to be through the amount of runs I score, not bow I captain the side."

Before then, Vaughan the football fan will be keeping a close eye on the reports his father will be faxing to him of his beloved Wednesday. "I'm hoping by the time I get back in early April that Wednesday will be in the FA Cup semi-finals," he said.

How, as a captain, would he be dealt with the kind of indiscipline Paolo Di Canio showed a few months ago? "It was a different kind of approach, I must admit," he said. "But I wouldn't mind seeing him back in blue and white if I'm honest. So if he does read *The Independent*, will you tell him to come back?"

Ben Holbrook has been informed that he cannot continue living on his past achievements. "I've told Ben that he can't live on two knocks which happened a long time ago," Graveney said, "and he's aware of it."

Graveney has been in Australia since 28 December, but did not have the full squad of 16 players with him until yesterday. Several have been on duty in the Test series which has made it impossible to select a properly balanced side in the warm-up friendlies. Equally, that has given less experienced players such as Vince Wells and Mark Alleyne the chance to practise under floodlights.

"We have learned a lot of things since the Sharjah tournament of 1997 where we won," Graveney said. "It's been on-going since then and we've dispensed with some things like the pinch-hitter in the shape of Ali Brown, though that was a matter of style not personnel. England in May will be different than anywhere else."

Graveney believes England's Test players will do well in the triangular series. "The downside might be the way they react to how the Ashes series has gone," he said. "Bodies tend to act more when you've lost than the way they feel when you've won."

"They were disappointed they lost the series. But I've been pointing out that the events of the past couple of months have now gone. They don't play any more Test cricket until after the World Cup."

"So they know their objective. Everything is now about trying to win it. It only comes around every four years. We are the host nation, so it is an incentive. Everyone is desperate to get into that squad. I could probably name seven or eight of the names right now."

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TODAY'S NUMBER

12

The number of red cards collected in eight seasons in Italian football - a Serie A record - by the Uruguayan defender Paolo Montero, who was sent off playing for Juventus against Milan on Wednesday. He has been sent off three times this season.

Fraser still in England frame

BY STEPHEN BRENKLEY
in Brisbane

A NEW England squad assembled here yesterday under new management, so naturally the bulk of the discussion on their arrival was concerned with those who were absent. The outcome seemed to be heartening for Angus Fraser, indifferent for Michael Atherton and irreversibly gloomy for Graham Thorpe.

For various reasons of injury and form all three, so central to so many of England's causes in this decade, have been omitted from the one-day squad who are about to contest the Carlton and United triangular series, a tournament which has assumed a greater significance this year because of the imminent World Cup.

In assessing their chances of making the final 15, David Graveney, who has taken over from Graham Gooch as manager of this section of the Australian tour was as candid as you would expect of a man who is also chairman of selectors and might like to keep a trick up his sleeve.

"I've had a long chat with Gus and told him he's still in our thoughts. I certainly don't see he's finished either as Test or one-day bowler. He's had a remarkable period of time in his life. He's disappointed not to be on this leg of the tour, but he could be extremely effective on English pitches in May and June."

Graveney mentioned other bowlers in similar vein (Peter Martin and Ian Austin), but it was Fraser for whom he reserved his greatest encouragement, a populist move by the chairman if ever there was one. Perhaps in similar vein he tried to be upbeat about Atherton, but warned that he would have to be fit and show himself to be for the one-day tournament in Sharjah in April.

As for Thorpe, who may be more essential to England's hopes than either of the other two, he reiterated the necessity for him to be fit for Sharjah. "But that looks completely unlikely," he said.

Ben Holbrook has been informed that he cannot continue living on his past achievements. "I've told Ben that he can't live on two knocks which happened a long time ago," Graveney said, "and he's aware of it."

Graveney has been in Australia since 28 December, but did not have the full squad of 16 players with him until yesterday. Several have been on duty in the Test series which has made it impossible to select a properly balanced side in the warm-up friendlies. Equally, that has given less experienced players such as Vince Wells and Mark Alleyne the chance to practise under floodlights.

"We have learned a lot of things since the Sharjah tournament of 1997 where we won," Graveney said. "It's been on-going since then and we've dispensed with some things like the pinch-hitter in the shape of Ali Brown, though that was a matter of style not personnel. England in May will be different than anywhere else."

Graveney believes England's Test players will do well in the triangular series. "The downside might be the way they react to how the Ashes series has gone," he said. "Bodies tend to act more when you've lost than the way they feel when you've won."

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Vaughan: Surprised by honour



Peter Jay

Michael Vaughan hones his batting in training with the England A squad at Headingley this week

ENGLAND A TOUR

SQUAD		ITINERARY	
Tour of Zimbabwe and South Africa		In Zimbabwe	
M J Vaughan	(Yorkshire, captain)	16 Jan	Jan Country Districts (Harare)
D L Morris	(Lancashire, vice-captain)	18 Jan	Jan Select XI (Harare)
M M Beaton	(Durham)	20-23 Jan	Jan Mashonaland (Harare)
D A Cosker	(Glamorgan)	26-29 Jan	Jan Presidents XI (Kwekwe)
A Flintoff	(Lancashire)	2-6 Feb	First Unofficial Test (Harare)
S J Harrison	(Durham)	9-13 Feb	Second Unofficial Test (Bulawayo)
P M Hutchison	(Yorkshire)	16 Feb	First One-Day International (Bulawayo)
R W T Key	(Kent)	18 Feb	Second One-Day International (Bulawayo)
J D Lewry	(Sussex)	20 Feb	Third One-Day International (Harare)
M B Loize	(Northamptonshire)	25-28 Feb	Gauteng Wanderers (Harare)
C M W Read	(Nottinghamshire, wicket-keeper)	4-8 March	Presidents XI (tbc)
G S Pollock	(Glamorgan)		
M G C Wimberley	(Gloucestershire)		
Manager: Phil Neale	Coach: John Emburey		

"I'll no doubt have my weaknesses as a captain because it's a new thing for me, but I'm just going to be honest and I hope people are honest with me. If they think there's

a weakness in something I'm doing I hope they'll come and tell me and I'll try and put that right. Obviously I hope I'm going to do a great job and we're very successful, but my ambition is to get into the England team and to do that it's going to be through the amount of runs I score, not bow I captain the side."

Before then, Vaughan the football fan will be keeping a close eye on the reports his father will be faxing to him of his beloved Wednesday. "I'm hoping by the time I get back in early April that Wednesday will be in the FA Cup semi-finals," he said.

How, as a captain, would he be dealt with the kind of indiscipline Paolo Di Canio showed a few months ago? "It was a different kind of approach, I must admit," he said. "But I wouldn't mind seeing him back in blue and white if I'm honest. So if he does read *The Independent*, will you tell him to come back?"

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Vandals fail to stop tour

BY BRIAN MCKENNA
in New Delhi

OFFICIALS FROM both countries are adamant Pakistan's first Test series on Indian soil in 12 years will go ahead as scheduled despite Hindu militants' vandalism of the New Delhi venue for the first match.

About 25 supporters of the extremist leader Bal Thackeray's Shiv Sena party stormed the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium on Wednesday and dug up the pitch. But the Delhi cricket secretary, Sunil Dev, said the damage is "minimum and repairable" and is confident the wicket will be ready before the Test starts on 28 January.

"Cricket lovers all over India are waiting for this tour and we will make sure it takes place," said Sunil. "We cannot be taken to ransom by fanatics not interested in the game."

Police tightened security around the ground after the incident, and the Board of Control for Cricket in India ordered other grounds staging Pakistan's matches to follow suit.

"All the venues will be protected with immediate effect," said the BCCI secretary, Jayawant Lele, adding he is in constant touch with the Indian government and Pakistani cricket officials. "We will not fail to provide adequate security. I am keeping the Pakistani officials posted of the situation. As of now, the tour is on," said Lele.

Pakistan, who last played a Test on Indian soil in March 1987, are due to arrive on 21 January for a two-Test



New Delhi's groundsman assesses the pitch damage. Reuters

Bribery inquest may be widened

BY JOHN PENDER
in Melbourne

THE INQUIRY into betting and match-fixing currently taking place in Pakistan could soon extend into other countries. The warning has come from Pakistani legal officials, who are currently in Australia to cross-examine Shane Warne and Mark Waugh.

The lawyers and court officials, who form part of the judicial inquiry into betting and match-fixing on the sub-continent, said the questioning of Warne and Waugh, which began in Melbourne yesterday, could stretch into the weekend.

The Lahore High Court registrar, Abdus Salam Khawar, arrived on Wednesday, along with the Pakistan Cricket Board's legal adviser, Ali Sibtain Fazli, and Azmat Saeed, the lawyer for the former Test captain Salim Malik.

Ali claimed the

Rugby Union: Grizzled veteran of the front row is happy to step into the Tigers' den for the last time

Probyn in it for pure pleasure

BY DAVID LLEWELLYN

THE TIGERS' lair holds few terrors for Jeff Probyn, indeed he is positively looking forward to making the trip to Welford Road tomorrow with lowly Barking for their Tetley Bitter Cup fourth-round tie against Leicester.

Probyn, the former England prop, has nothing but happy memories of visits to the ground. "I played some of my best rugby at Welford Road with Wasps," explained the 42-year-old, who is now director of rugby at Barking. "I also captained the Barbarians to their first win over Leicester in five years, 1997."

"And then last year I played in the same team as my son Steven in the Dean Richards Testimonial match up there. Steven actually led the team on to the pitch. It was a great moment."

There was another great moment for this grizzled veteran of the front row, who turned tight-head prop into an art - a dark art. After a number of replacements had been made Probyn found himself coming on again for his son. "I got up off the bench," he recalled, "and as I went on to the pitch my son came up to me, stopped, and gave me a kiss. We actually got a round of applause for that."

Barking's visit is a bonus for Probyn. He has decided to start the game and said: "It will be my last chance to get on to the Leicester pitch and it should be a wonderful occasion for us. Although the idea of actually beating Leicester is pure fantasy."

"This is a side of amateurs taking on full-time professionals. If the gulf between Premiership One and Two is big enough, then the one between us in National League Two South - effectively the Fourth Division - and Leicester is vast."

But there is no way Probyn wants to see an end to such apparent mismatches. The FA Cup is it not, but this competition still allows for a degree of romance in an ever-hardening professional world.

"We have won the right to play in this round. It is down to the luck of the draw that we have Leicester just as Holland had every right to play England in the World Cup qualifier in the autumn," insisted Probyn.

"In every sport you want to measure yourself against the best around. When I played for England we all loved to play against New Zealand, South Africa and Australia because there was a yardstick by which you could assess where you were in terms of ability. Holland earned that right in the World Cup. We have done so by winning through to this point."

He even admitted that he was



The former England prop, Jeff Probyn, is looking forward to taking his Barking side to Leicester for tomorrow's Tetley Bitter Cup match

Peter Jay

excited at the prospect of the tie. "It would not have been quite the same if we had been drawn against a club from a lower division. But Leicester are one of the great clubs. It will be a tremendous experience for our players," said Probyn, who won the last of his 37 caps against Ireland in 1993.

"All I want from the team is a good performance. We will lose the game. There is no doubt about that. We would lose it whichever side Leicester selected against us. But I am hoping that my players will provide credible opposition for Leicester and do themselves justice.

"Most of them have never played in a game like this. I think the biggest problem will be that they

might freeze, given the intensity of the atmosphere and the size of the crowd."

"I won't be telling them to kill the ball and slow the game down. I will simply tell them to go out and enjoy

themselves and to take as much as they can from this particular occasion."

That is just what Gary Usher, a gas board trustee, intends to do. He will

be packing down on the other side of the front row from Probyn and he cannot wait for the confrontation with Leicester's renowned ABC club - Graham Rowntree, Richard Cockrell and Darren Garforth, Eng-

land players all.

"I feel good about it," said Usher, who has been with Barking for 20 years, since he was 15 and turning

out for the Colts. "Saturday can't

come quick enough. We'll give them a hell of a first half because our adrenaline levels will be high. We'll be fired up. But ultimately their fitness is going to tell. We just want to give them a good game and not let ourselves down."

The East London club, which was founded in 1930 as Park Modern Old Boys, is the alma mater of England's most-capped prop Jason Leonard, who has made 67 appearances, so they must know a thing or two.

Indeed Usher was around when Leonard was a downy infant (in front row terms) and just learning his trade. "He was a hit younger than me," said Usher, "but I played in the same team as Jason on and off for two seasons before he joined

Saracens. He used to ask me for advice in the early part of his career and he still comes back to the club and for a chat with his old mates."

Kris Chesney, the Saracens wing-cum-lock, is another old boy. They have also won the Essex Cup seven times in nine years. These are no mugs on or off the field. They were originally drawn at home but quickly opted to play in the Tigers' stadium after all the takings will be that much higher.

And up front they know they can draw on the bottomless box of trickery of Probyn. You'd have to be barking mad to expect the underdogs to beat the Tigers. But Leicester will still know they have been in a scrap.

'We have won the right to play. It is down to the luck of the draw that we have Leicester, just as Holland had every right to play England in the autumn'

Ainslie riding the wave of British optimism

Olympic silver-medallist is taking on the best. By Stuart Alexander in Melbourne

GREY SKIES, a chill wind, and rain lots of rain, must have made it feel more like home as Ben Ainslie took to the waters of Port Phillip Bay yesterday for the opening race of the Laser World Championship. The 21-year-old is one of 59 in the squad of Olympic sailors sent by Britain to contest the World Sailing Championships, including seven of the 11 classes which will be doing battle 600 miles further north for medals in Sydney in September next year.

Ainslie, winner of a silver medal in 1996 and desperate for gold in 2000, is that breed of sportsman who pursues a punishing training regime and does not need the additional stimulus of a big occasion. He just wants to win everything every time and this time there are 141 yachtsmen trying to stop him.

So this is a big occasion, much bigger than the Olympics, where only one entry per country is permitted in any one class, where some classes need pre-qualifying, where many countries do not have representatives in all 11 classes, and where the total allocation to the sport is 445. Here there are 57 countries - there were 78 in Atlanta - but nearly as many competitors, and that is with three classes missing, men's and women's boards, and the restored two-man keelboat, the Star. But it includes many non-Olympic classes, including the International 14.

"This event is immense," says the president of the sports world governing body, Paul Henderson, who sees it not only as a blueprint for the future but one in which the International Sailing Federation will

force the Olympic classes to take part. "Everyone wants their own little empire, but personally I believe the pie we can bake together is bigger than the individual pieces."

Denmark is bidding strongly for a pre-Athens event in 2003 and Henderson, annoyed that the Star class "reneged" on an agreement to hold its world championship in Melbourne, said "all the classes will have to sign a contract to stage their world championships together. If they don't sign they don't want to be part of the start of their selection process."

The British system of selection, which may vary from class to class, will be published next month, but is likely to vary considerably from either the sudden death, one-week trial, or the early pre-selection processes through which the country has swung in recent years. Britain, he said, "is looking pretty good in five classes and we are working hard to close the gap in the others. We are also already looking ahead to 2004."

The event runs until 17 January and at the end of it there will be some confirmation of the pecking order between the countries as well as the progress being made by individual rivals within the UK for the single Olympic representation. The Australians are confident of a strong showing, but there are further major tests for them and their rivals at Eynesbury, Medemblik and Kiel in the spring and summer.

are increasingly required before money is released.

All the major countries have sent full-strength squads to Australia for concurrent events which, although hosted by the nine leading yacht clubs in Melbourne, are centrally co-ordinated and managed.

Britain's Olympic manager, John Derbyshire, said: "This is a great opportunity for all the countries to show off their Olympic strength and we hope to be in the top five nations. For one or two, this is the start of their selection process."

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Ben Ainslie: Out to produce a golden performance

HOW THEY LINE UP IN MELBOURNE

LASER

BEN AINSLIE, at 21 and already with an Olympic silver medal in the bank, still reigns supreme on the home front, and it is rare for him to lose a race to a British rival in a series. He is the current world sailor of the year and has beaten the 1996 Olympic gold medallist, Brazil's Robert Scheidt, three times since then. These two, and Australia's Michael Blackburn, hold the edge over the others.

FINN

A YEAR older than Ben Ainslie, Iain Percy is making an impressive transition from the Laser, taking third place at the 1998 European Championship. He is both working with and sailing against Richard Stenhouse. The men to beat are the 1996 gold medallist, Poland's Mateusz Kusznierewicz, and the man whom he beat into silver, now ranked No 1, Belgium's Sébastien Godefroid.

EUROPE

SHIRLEY ROBERTSON is bidding to go to her third Olympics still as the only one to have represented Britain in the women's single-handed. She was fourth in 1996 and continues to put a lot of effort into development of her sail design, having had to abandon the work done on a carbon fibre mast. May still be looking at top six instead of top two, which should be contested by defending world champion and world sailor of the year, Carolijn Brouwer, of the Netherlands, and her national rival, Margriet Matthijsse.

470 MEN

THE GAP left by the death of John Merricks and the consequent departure from the class of his 1996 silver medal partner, Ian Walker, was always going to be a hard one to fill. Current national champion Nick Rogers, partnered by Joe Glenfield, is, at 22, still making the transition from being a youth champion to winning in the senior ranks. A strongly-contested class

in which France provides the current world champions, rivalling the 1996 gold medallists from Ukraine, with the Portuguese, Finnish and American crews chasing.

A TOP 10 place would be something worth celebrating for a class in which Britain has sometimes promised much but rarely delivered. Bethan Raggatt and Sarah Webb remain the No 1s, but until the situation is finally resolved, there are no grounds for those concerns, he said. "We have set ourselves a deadline of the end of this month to make a decision and the views of the second division clubs will be fully considered."

Talking of chief executives, Bath are well on the road towards appointing one of their own. According to Bob Coljevic, the club's new general manager, six candidates have been interviewed and two short-listed.

Geoff Cooke, the former England manager who left Bedford last month, and Mike Smith, who quit his post with Saracens early in the season, are both thought to be available.

America's Cup challenge hits stormy waters

LAST MINUTE talks to put Britain's Elsin America's Cup challenge on an entirely new track were arranged in London last night. But what is seen by one side as merger proposals may be viewed as an attempt at a takeover by the current directors of the Spirit of Britain syndicate, writes Stuart Alexander in Melbourne.

The Royal Yachting Association is at the centre of proposals, believed

to involve a major insurance group, to inject not only millions of pounds of sponsorship cash but a new management structure for the challenge, which is officially lodged by the Royal Dorset Yacht Club.

It is not known how the current principals, which include Andrew Graves, a professor in management studies at Bath University, and leading British yachtsman Lawrie Smith,

may react. They and others put up substantial amounts of personal money to keep development work money while the search continued for a big cash supporter.

Several major companies, including British Aerospace and Silicon Graphics, have also backed the project.

Days rather than weeks remain

to give the green light in time to build the first of what is hoped to be two hulls designed by Ian Howlett. But Graves is angry that earlier work has been upset by pessimistic speculation and he said he had withdrawn plans to announce underwriting support from private individuals.

"We have been stabbed in the back and in the front," he said.

Smith is in Melbourne taking part in the Soling World Championship as

part of his bid to represent Britain for the third time at the Olympics in 2000. He had been nominated director of sailing but top match-racer Chris Law had said often and publicly that he would like to steer the boat. Law's position with the new group was last night unclear, but it is believed he is in direct contact with him and he has been unhappy about delays in being offered any permanent role by Smith.

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Di Canio's future cast in doubt

PAOLO DI CANIO'S future will today come under discussion by the Sheffield Wednesday board as they ponder what direction to take over the unruly Italian. Di Canio's threat to reveal details of a letter containing his grievances against the club unless officials meet with him in Italy, has added to the resentment between the player and the club.

The latest sicknote from his doctor has ruled the striker out of returning to England until 31 January. His behaviour has led to him being suspended without pay for a month, a course

of action by Wednesday which is certain to continue when the ban expires on Saturday.

The chairman, Dave Richards, and his directors are likely to consider transferring Di Canio, although any fee offered would be at a fraction of the £4.5m club-record paid to Celtic in the summer of last year. With little interest in a player becoming a pariah, it would be hard for Richards to cut his losses.

The Sheffield Wednesday secretary, Graham Mackrell, said: "There is a board meeting

tomorrow. It's purely routine, although I'm sure Mr Di Canio will be discussed. I would think whether we transfer-list him is academic, however, because nobody has had a chance to speak to him."

With Wednesday holding his registration, Di Canio under contract for another two-and-a-half years to the club, could be subjected to a worldwide ban by the club.

Middlesbrough hope their former Internazionale striker Marco Branca will return to the club soon after months of

speculation over a career-threatening knee injury.

The 34-year-old has played only 25 minutes' football, as a second-half substitute at Spurs this season, after a knee operation.

Branca has not figured in manager Bryan Robson's plans for months and the general feeling on Teesside is that Branca will not play for the Premiership club again.

But Viv Anderson, the Boro assistant manager, said: "Branca is working on his fitness in Italy. We hope he will

return and start training with us in the next few weeks."

Branca scored nine goals in 11 appearances for Middlesbrough last season.

Dietmar Hamann, the New-

castle United midfielder, wants to quit the club only five months into his first season in the Premiership. The German World Cup man was signed from Bayern Munich in the summer for £5.25m by then Newcastle boss Kenny Dalglish.

Hamann signed a five-year contract on his arrival on Tyneside but is unhappy at the way he has been used by Dalglish's successor as manager, Ruud Gullit.

Under the Dutchman, Hamann has struggled to hold down a regular place in the first team although he has played in the Magpies' last two games.

However, he was sent off in his last Premiership game at Liverpool on 28 December. "I came here to achieve something," said the 25-year-old yesterday. "But when I am not allowed to, when I play no defined role in the team, then that makes it pointless."

Hill is given his big chance

NON-LEAGUE NOTEBOOK

IT WORKED for Aston Villa and Leicester City, and now Stevenage Borough are hoping it will work for them.

Both the Premiership clubs turned to Wycombe Wanderers to fill their most recent managerial vacancies, with John Gregory going to Villa Park and, before him, Martin O'Neill taking over at Filbert Street. Both men have done well in the top flight - and Stevenage are hoping that Gregory's former No 2 will take them back to the top of the Football Conference.

The Hertfordshire club have named Richard Hill, who worked under Gregory at Adams Park for 15 months, as the successor to the controversially sacked Paul Fairclough at Broadhall Way.

After being released by Leicester City Hill, now 35, made his name as an attacking midfielder in the non-League game with Nuneaton Borough. He moved on to League football with Northampton Town and later played for Watford and Oxford United.

Workington are enjoying their debut season in the FA Carlsberg Vase. The Cumbrian club have reached tomorrow's fourth-round stage, the last 32, in which they travel down the M6 to tackle the West Midlands side, Oldbury United.

Although they reached the quarter-finals of the League Cup twice in successive years, 1994 and 1995, Workington are by no means used to success in FA competitions. The last time they reached the last 32 of an FA tournament was 1933-34, when they lost 2-1 at home to Preston North End in the fourth round of the FA Cup.

In subsequent years just about the only time Workington, who were voted out of the League in 1977, made national headlines in the FA Cup came in 1958, when a Dennis Violette hat-trick earned Manchester United a 3-1 win at Borough Park in the Busby Babes' last third-round tie.

Workington have had a dreadful record in the FA Umbro Trophy since their debut 22 years ago, but now they have been relegated from the Unibond to the North Western Trains League they are competing in the Vase, in which they have already enjoyed better fortunes.

Workington are managed by the former Leeds United full-back, Peter Hampton, while their most famous player is the former Tottenham and Liverpool midfielder, Paul Stewart. If he hits top form tomorrow, another Wembley visit for him - and a first for Workington - may be on the agenda this year.

Game on for orange wigs and gimmicks

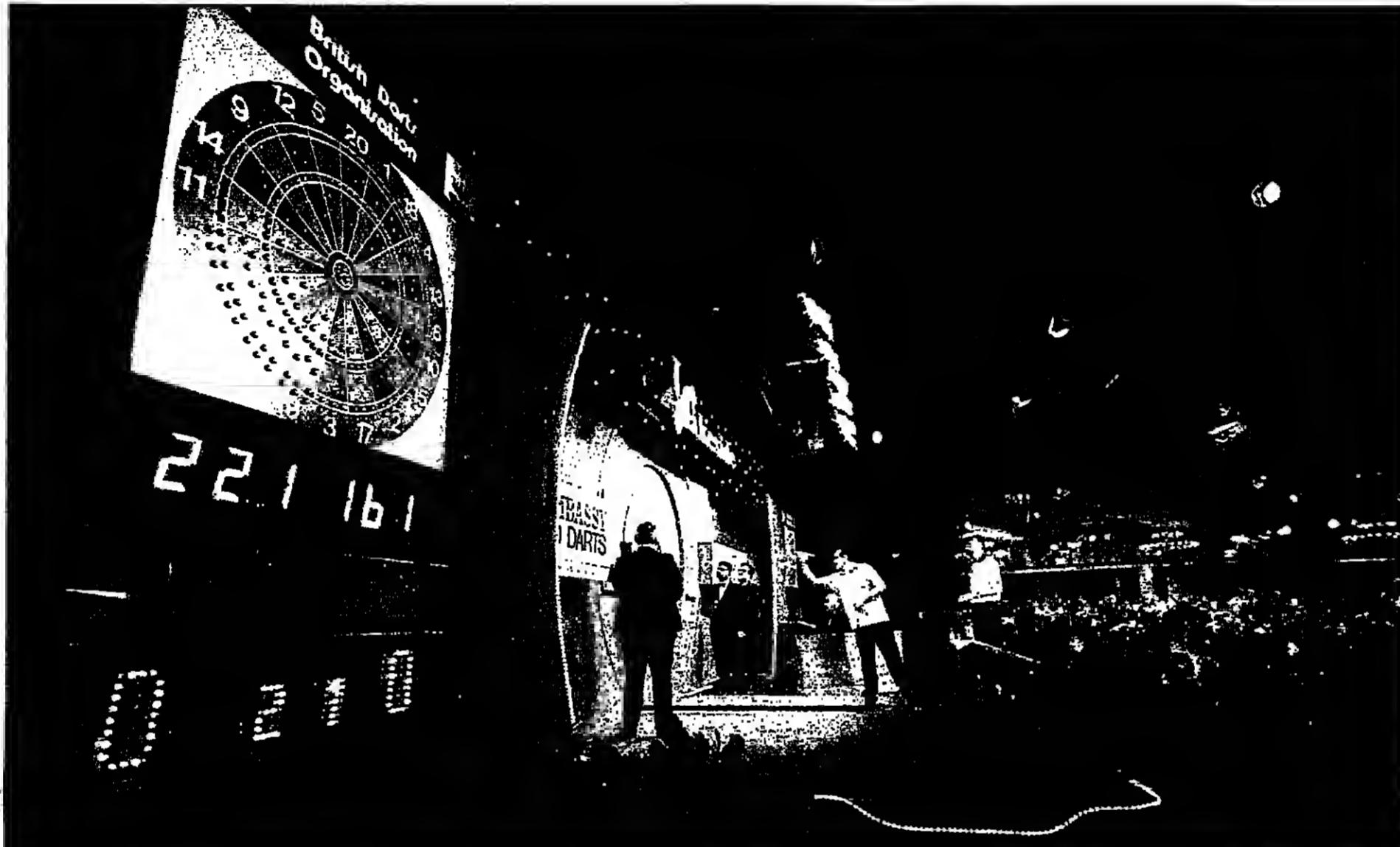
Darts harks back to the old days in battle against a damaging double top. By Greg Wood at Frimley Green

THERE IS an entire room at the Lakeside Country Club in Frimley Green covered with small, framed photographs of the performers who have trodden its boards. Most are like headstones in a cabaret graveyard, the last remaining evidence of turns like Shazam, the Grumbleweeds and young man called Andrew O'Connor. In his publicity shot, he is holding four metal coathangers and a hacksaw. Whatever it was he used to do with them, clearly it did not catch on.

But darts did, for a while at least, and the Lakeside, home of the Embassy World Championship, was the centre of the throwing world. Look carefully amid the crowd of long-forgotten artists and there are more familiar faces - John Lowe, and Eric Bristow, whose World Final defeat by Keith Deller in 1983 drew a television audience of millions. Sixteen years on, arrowmen still converge on Surrey in the first week of January. The difference is that hardly anyone is watching.

Or is it in the nation's living rooms, anyway. The County Club itself, on the other hand, is packed to its 1,100-strong capacity every night. At the reception desk early on Wednesday evening, a young woman was making a call from the Dutch Embassy. Ray Barneveld, the reigning Embassy champion, is from the Netherlands, and so too is another leading contender, Roland Scholten. "We realise that you're completely sold out," the voice at the other end of the line must have been saying, "but is there, you know, nudge, nudge, any, any you could fit a few of us in?" The answer was a polite but firm no.

Walking into the main arena, you could see the management's



All eyes are on the oche as the Embassy World Championships draws the crowds to the Lakeside Country Club, Frimley Green

Allsport

point, not least because most of the Netherlands - and every orange novelty wig in Europe - seemed to be there already. Thanks to Barneveld, Scholten and the engaging Co Stompe, a tram driver and amateur astronomer from Amsterdam, darts is big in the Netherlands right now. Along with the raucous orange hordes of supporters, there are television and radio crews, and enough journalists to be called a corps.

This, of course, is how it was in Britain 15 years ago, before television lost interest, the sponsors drifted away and darts

reacted by splitting itself in two. The players at Lakeside this week are not throwing for the undisputed world championship, but a version of it. Five days ago, Phil Taylor, probably the finest player the sport has seen, lifted an alternative title at the Circus Tavern in Purfleet. Darts was never taken all that seriously, even in its heyday, and satirists found it an easy target. Its current position, though, is plain sight, and all its own work.

A five-year legal wrangle between the two factions, the British Darts Organisation, which runs the Embassy, and

the breakaway Professional Darts Council, reached an uneasy truce last year. Even so, there is still little competitive fraternising and both organisations insist on the right to run their own world championship.

They put a brave face on it at Frimley Green, and the audience, many of whom return year after year, seem to know or care little about the alternative world title. Many elements of the darts experience are the same anywhere. Between the first two matches, one young man from a table near the front went to the bar

to get his round in. He returned with 48 bottles of lager.

And yet Taylor will always be the pudgy, moustachioed spectre at this banquet. There is little strength in depth at the Purfleet event, and perhaps as few as eight of its competitors would merit a place among the 32 finalists at Frimley Green. A world championship without him is not worthy of the name.

In his absence, they depend on old-fashioned virtues which served darts well enough in the 1980s, like nicknames and gimmicks. Scholten, according to the announcer, is "the man

they call triped". The more you think about it, the less inclined you are to ask why Ted Hankey, meanwhile, claims a lifelong obsession with Dracula, and arrives on stage complete with a swirling black cape.

Jacobus "Wilhelm" "Co" Stompe is a bit of a star, too, and not simply because of his passing resemblance to Lofty in *EastEnders*. He throws a bit like Lofty would have done as well, all featherly and feeble, although even with a blindfold on, he would beat anyone in the Queen Vic's darts team. He drives a tram on the longest route in

Amsterdam, and relaxes with his guitar or by pointing his telescope at the beacons. But the Embassy will have to do without him, too. He missed double-top to beat Scholten on Wednesday night, and went out. There were small children bunting autographs as the two Dutchmen left the stage. At its best, darts still has not just skill and tension, but also the characters to kindle and sustain the public's interest. As long as it insists on crowning two world champions, though, it is heading down the phlogole as surely as the man with the coathangers.

SM BOURNE

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SPORT

BRITISH SAILORS TAKE ON THE WORLD P28 • FOOTBALL'S FUTURE P24

Pressure grows for Korda ban

PETER KORDA may find himself banned for a year after failing a drugs test at Wimbledon if the International Tennis Federation manages to overturn last month's ruling by the independent appeals panel it appointed to hear the case.

The appeals committee, comprising three experts with legal, medical and technical knowledge, decided on 21 December that Korda should be ordered to return \$94,529 (£59,880) Wimbledon prize money to the ITF and be deducted 199 ranking world points after testing positive for an anabolic steroid.

But the panel decided against a customary one-year ban stipulated in the ITF's rules because there

TENNIS

BY JOHN ROBERTS

were sufficient mitigating circumstances. After the hearing, which considered evidence from the ITF, Korda said he had no idea how the banned substance had found its way into his system.

Bizarrely, the ITF now wants to take its independent appeals panel to another appeal after criticism of leniency. Mounting disquiet among players preparing for the Australian Open, where Korda is due to defend the men's singles title in Melbourne in 11 days' time, has prompted the ITF president, Brian

Tobin, to call for the case to go to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Switzerland.

"The ITF supports the war against doping and cheating," Tobin said yesterday. "I don't believe it is our fault the full penalty hasn't been imposed. We will lodge our appeal to CAS."

With less than two weeks to make an appeal, Tobin added, "My board doesn't meet again until Melbourne (during the Australian Open), but we'll have to lodge an appeal first."

Korda, a 30-year-old left-hander from the Czech Republic, lost to Britain's Tim Henman in the quarter-finals at Wimbledon. Korda's urine sample was found to

contain the steroid nandrolone, which is categorised as a class one prohibited substance under the tennis anti-doping programme.

Jonas Björkman, who helped Sweden retain the Davis Cup in Milan last month, and the women's world No 1, Lindsay Davenport of the United States, are among the players who have said Korda was treated lightly.

Björkman said on Wednesday Korda should have been suspended and the ITF was "scared". Davenport, who, like Björkman, is in Perth playing in the Hopman Cup, said yesterday: "I think it's a little bit awkward in the fact that he (Korda) got off. First of all you

goes in you body. I don't think anyone just takes pills without knowing what it is. Second of all it was wrong, and it was illegal. Hopefully, there'll be some explanation to why they let him off instead of just saying, 'We're letting him off'. It's one of the drugs where it's in the book that if you take it, it's a year off."

Davenport added: "It seems like in tennis there's always exceptions made for players. They are opening up a can of worms to make exceptions for everybody that tests positive to anything."

Jan-Michael Gambill, Davenport's Hopman Cup partner, said: "If they find someone guilty of testing positive to something like that, they

should be out of there. In all other sports do that. It's a no-brainer."

Tobin said he was "delighted the players feel so positive about doping and cheating" and dismisses any suggestion that the ITF might have covered up other positive tests. "We are not sitting on, or have sat on, any infringements of the (drug) code," Tobin said, adding that the ITF conducted more than 1,000 drug tests every year.

The ITF is preparing to cast its vote for a unified anti-doping programme for sport and will be represented at an anti-doping conference organised by the International Olympic Committee on 2 February. "The main difference in

the proposed policy," Tobin said, "is that the minimum penalty for hard substances - higher-class substances - would be a minimum of two years' suspension."

While supporting the case for stiffer penalties, the ITF seems to find it difficult to impose the ones already in the book. The only other case involving leading players saw a lengthy legal dispute in the High Court after Sweden's Mats Wilander, the former world No 1, and Karel Novacek, a Czech Davis Cup player, were reported to have tested positive for cocaine - a class two prohibited substance on the tennis tour - at the French Open back in 1995.

More tennis, page 27

Age-limit fear for Olympics

THE PROPOSAL that football's World Cup should become biennial rather than staged every four years has not been greeted with great enthusiasm within the sport and has already had a knock-on effect on others.

Athletes has considered making changes to the structure of its competitions to protect itself against the expected deluge of football. The International Amateur Athletic Federation's is considering restricting its Olympic competition to athletes aged 23 and under to protect the "exclusivity" of its world championships, which could encounter a scheduling conflict with the World Cup or the Olympics.

Under the proposal from Sepp Blatter, the president of world football's governing body, Fifa, to stage the World Cup twice as often, the tournament would not be played in an Olympic year, but then it could clash with the biennial athletics world championships. That event could then be moved from odd years to even years to prevent a clash, an IAAF spokesman, Giorgio Reineri, said yesterday.

Such a change would put every other championships in the same year as the Olympics, where track and field is considered the main attraction.

"If there will be this clash, we will have to protect our world championships," Reineri

ATHLETICS

BY STEPHEN WILSON

said at the IAAF's headquarters in Monaco. "We will need to be sure we will be the only event with the best athletes. Naturally, the IAAF will study the best way in order to assure the exclusivity of the best athletes for its world championships."

Reineri would not speculate on how the Olympics would be affected, but he would not rule out the possibility that the IAAF put an age limit of 23 on Olympic competitors, just as Fifa does for its Olympic tournament.

The IAAF's president, Primo Nebiolo, has in the past raised the possibility of restricting Olympic events to young athletes, but the threat never materialised, and the IOC president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, has largely succeeded in placating Nebiolo.

While Blatter did not specify when the proposed biennial tournaments would be held, it is widely assumed they would be staged in odd years, probably starting in 2009. Such a schedule would put the World Cup in conflict with the IAAF championships, which recently changed from a four-year to two-year cycle. The IAAF championships are considered by some as the third largest international sports competition behind the Olympics and World Cup.

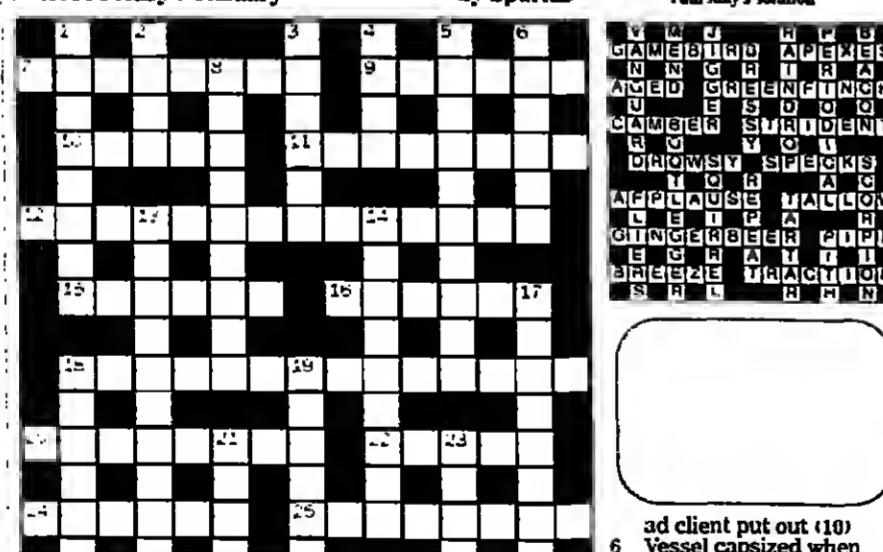


An early-morning pairing in the first round of the President's Putter competition at Rye Golf Club near Hastings enjoy the sunrise yesterday

Allsport

THE FRIDAY CROSSWORD

No.3814 Friday 8 January by Spurius



Forest caretaker role is enough for Adams

MICKY ADAMS has ruled himself out of the running for the manager's job at Nottingham Forest.

The former Brentford and Swanside manager was placed in caretaker charge at the City Ground following the dismissal of Dave Bassett this week. Ron Atkinson is the favourite for the post in the long term - but Forest's England midfielder Steve Stone has urged the club's board to consider Adams.

Adams insisted yesterday he is not interested in the position permanently. "I don't want the job and I won't be applying for it," he said. "It's flattering of Steve to suggest I should be considered but I'm just keeping the seat warm for whoever takes over."

However, Stone backed Adams by saying: "I think he should be given the job until the end of the season. He's a good motivator, a good coach and he has the respect of everybody in the dressing room."

Wolves have denied reports

they were set to make a move for Bassett. The club had been linked with him late last year, while he was still in charge at the City Ground, before they appointed Colin Lee in succession to Mark McGhee.

John Richards, Wolves' managing director, said: "These stories are completely untrue. There has been no contact between ourselves and Dave Bassett, nor is there any planned. Colin Lee was offered and accepted the post of team manager at Wolves until the end of the season, and there is no intention to change that."

Wolves hope to complete the purchase of the Norwegian international striker, Havard Flo, from the German Bundesliga club Werder Bremen for £700,000 today. Benfica's Swedish forward, Martin Pringle, is

expected to join Charlton on loan today.

Both Robbie Fowler and his club, Liverpool, have insisted they are still in negotiations over a new contract. Responding to reports that talks had broken down, the England striker said: "I have not turned down any contract I am still in negotiations with Liverpool."

The Anfield press officer, Ian Cottam, said: "There are ongoing discussions with the player, and we expect to meet Robbie and his adviser in the near future."

Bolton have completed the £300,000 transfer of the utility player Paul Warhurst from Crystal Palace, while the Dutch left-winger Willem Korsten has finalised his move from Vitesse Arnhem to Leeds on loan for the rest of the season.

The Inland Revenue has issued a High Court winding-up order claiming unpaid tax of £433,000 from the struggling First Division club, Portsmouth.

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Sea and sand for Schmeichel

PETER SCHMEICHEL will miss Manchester United's Premiership encounter with West Ham on Sunday - because he is sunning himself on a beach in the Caribbean.

The Danish goalkeeper has gone on holiday with the blessing of United's manager, Alex Ferguson.

Ferguson fears fatigue among his players, who virtually had no summer break because of the World Cup, and has

for their triple assault on Premiership, Champions' League and FA Cup honours this season.

United spokesman, Ken Ramsden, said: "Peter has been given a break in the same way David Beckham had a rest earlier in the season."

"This is in line with what Ferguson is anxious to keep his players as fresh as possible whenever he can."

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FRIDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION



John Ho Park emerged briefly from the shadows, tearful and penitent. He was sorry he blew £6.2m and broke the bank. But not as sorry as his former mates in the City. It was their money...

Early yesterday morning, a casually dressed man stepped from his flat in central London, apologised to those gathered outside and then promptly burst into tears. There is little doubt that John Ho Park had cause to feel repented. Within hours, scores of City traders were calling for his blood at an emergency meeting that was called to discuss the biggest trading scandal to hit the City since Nick Leesoo broke Barings Bank.

In the eyes of the self-employed dealers who attended the meeting at the Financial Services Authority's headquarters at Canary Wharf, in London's Docklands, Ho Park's "offence" was quite simple: he had lost their money.

Betting on financial futures, the Cambridge graduate had gambled on the rise and fall of the German government bond market. He seriously misjudged, and over two frantic days shortly before Christmas he lost a not-so-cool £6.2m – money which belonged to other traders and, crucially, money which he could not repay.

"We are the fall guys in all of this. Why is it the small guys who have lost out?" asked one angry trader at yesterday's heated meeting at which regulators were jeered and heckled.

"Are the Serious Fraud Squad going to be called in to investigate?" demanded another of the traders, who have each lost between £15,000 and £1m.

Ever since New Year's Eve, when *The Independent* revealed the identity of the trader whose actions led to the closure of Griffin Trading Company – a sizeable Chicago-based trading house – and GLB (Derivatives) Ltd, Ho Park, 27, has been in hiding.

Though he has been in daily contact with his family, his lawyers and one or two business associates, there has been no sign of Ho Park at his home in London's upmarket Eaton Place. Likewise, there have been few clues as to his whereabouts at his mother's house in Essex, Surrey, where the curtains remain drawn and telephone messages are not returned.

There was speculation that after leaving his flat on 30 December last year, he and his girlfriend Charinette Curling, a kindergarten teacher,

had gone overseas. But after Ho Park's dramatic but brief appearance yesterday morning, having been tracked down by the media, it was clear he had spent what must have been a very unfestive festive season in Britain.

One can only guess what has been going through his mind. While the FSA said earlier this week that those traders who had lost money could expect to recover 50 per cent of their losses, the Serious Fraud Squad could yet be called in if there is any evidence Ho Park committed a crime rather than just an expensive error.

"If we discover any evidence of criminal misconduct we shall pass it on to the relevant authorities," Michael Folgar of the FSA, told traders.

The liquidator, Finbarr O'Connell, of accountants Grant Thornton, has said he will be meeting Ho Park for a full and frank discussion "within the next couple of days".

Ho Park's mistake is small beer compared with the £260m lost in 1995 by Nick Leesoo trading in Singapore, yet there are similarities be-

that covers derivatives – the complex financial instruments on which he lost the millions.)

"He usually leaves his house before 6am in the morning and is not back until very late in the evening," said one of his neighbours, Jose Ferreira.

"He and his girlfriend are the sort of people who keep themselves to themselves. I don't think they go out very often to bars or restaurants. They occasionally have people around but not very often."

"He seems like a hard-working young man who wants to get on in life."

Frieda and associates from Cambridge, from where he graduated in 1993 with a BA in Mathematics, remember a pleasant, quiet man with a goatee beard and an earring.

"I couldn't believe it when I read about John in the papers. It is not the sort of thing you would have expected of him," said one friend, who asked not to be named.

Another said: "He was the sort of person who always seemed to keep a pretty low profile when

he was at college. To be honest, I am shocked and I know his closest are even more so."

David Curling, the father of Ho Park's girlfriend and a director of City stockbrokers Williams de Broe, was even more blunt: "There has been a lot of rubbish written about him and I am sure that those people who have been writing it will be hearing from the lawyers very soon."

That is, if his creditors do not get to him first.

The mood at yesterday's FSA meeting was ugly.

While those traders will get some money back over the next couple of months, the nature of the way in which they operate means that without this capital they cannot work.

In order to trade, individuals need to be able to prove to regulators that they have the cash to cover their costs. To do this traders have to place money on deposit with a recognised firm, such as Griffin. What has come as a shock to traders was that Griffin put their money into one central pot and that – through an apparent loop

hole – Ho Park was able to use their money to fund his trading.

Envy may be another factor. Traders are clearly angry that while many had lost money they had raised themselves, Ho Park, who drives a new BMW and whose trademark jeans and trainers belie his wealth, was using money which he had been given by his father, the Korean millionaire Young Ho Park.

Bars and pubs in the City have been buzzing this week with talk of an £18m trust fund set up by Ho Park's father – who still lives in Seoul – for his son.

"Why have we lost out while Park has become a rich boy?" asked one.

Other traders have criticised what they describe as the casual way in which Ho Park reacted to his disastrous loss.

"I was in the offices the morning the news came through and it was announced that we were basically dead and buried," said one Griffin employee who worked from the building where Ho Park had an office.

"Park walked into the lounge to get a cup of water. He did not look stressed. I knew that he knew what I knew. I remember looking him in the eyes and thinking to myself, 'what a prat'. I remember the expression on his face – he was not fazed at all by what had happened."

Over the next few days, Ho Park will be forced to explain himself – both to the regulators and to the wider trading community. He was said last night to be feeling surprised at the way events had turned.

"He is speaking to his solicitors," said his friend's father. "It has come as a thunderbolt to me and a thunderbolt to the lawyers."

"Thunderbolt or not, there is real anger amongst those traders who make their living trading on the vagaries of the markets. One trader who rang *The Independent* said: 'You know why the traders have not revealed where Park is and why he has been able to stay hidden for so long? It is because we know what you will do – you'll give him a chance to have his say. All we want to do is to cut his throat.'

It is clear that early morning tears and apologies, however sincerely meant, are not going to be enough.

Additional reporting by John Wilcock

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SCIENCE

ACTIONAID

Cure for the NHS

Sir: You point out (leading article, 6 January) that if we want an adequately funded health service we have to pay for it. There is no simpler or fairer way than through direct taxation, whatever the political objections.

Replacement of old buildings is important but must take second place to the recruitment and retention of staff. The shortage of nurses is the cause of most of the current troubles. A significant pay rise for them should be a first charge on the extra money announced for next financial year. The other causes of low morale, like the years of denigration of public service and the disastrous attempt to turn the NHS into a business, will take longer to reverse.

Finally, do not be lured into advocating private/public partnerships on the Private Finance Initiative model. These schemes for hospital building have been shown to be very expensive and to involve major bed reductions. It should now be clear that bed numbers have already been cut beyond what is acceptable.

PETER FISHER
President
National Health Service
Consultants' Association
Great Bourton, Oxfordshire

Sir: The crisis in nursing is in related to retention, not recruitment. As young people embark on nursing education they become disillusioned by what they experience in the wards.

Working conditions for most nurses are deplorable. Frequent spells of night duty and missed meal breaks leave the individual exhausted and debilitated. Too many doctors are autocratic. High sickness levels along with inevitably high maternity leave frequently creates understaffing. Often the low staffing creates potential dangers for patients and spiralling decline in morale. Low pay adds insult to injury. Staff nurses in charge of wards earn as little as £16,000 per year.

The drive to train more nurses without addressing these problems merely pours people "into the trenches" and leads to lower morale because the clinical staff cannot cope with ever increasing numbers of students. The solution is a root-and-branch reform of the social conditions of nursing, greatly enhanced pay and sound education.

YVONNE FULTON
Furley, Wiltshire

Sir: You report that staff shortages and lack of extra wards and operating sessions were to blame for patients having to be transferred to private hospitals ("Private sector helps NHS to meet targets", 30 December).

In most hospitals, wards have been shut down and fewer nurses employed as deliberate policy to save money. The bed situation is made worse by emergency admissions – particularly medical admissions in surgical beds, which reach epidemic proportions during winter; thus interfering further with surgical lists. The disastrous "internal market" has caused diversion of money from NHS hospitals, made worse by hordes of "managers" with the single aim of balancing books at all costs.

The proposed changes by Mr Dohson will make sure that this state of affairs will continue and is likely to worsen. The NHS trust and health authority appointees have become entrenched. The smokescreen of new ideas and jargon will make sure that fundamental problems of inadequate funding and bureaucratic stranglehold are not dealt with.

T.R. KAPUR FRCS
Newcastle,
Staffordshire

Sir: Your leading article of 6 January states clearly why voters who "want to spend more on the NHS... will have to meet the costs". Now is the time for the Government to take advantage of the value which the great majority

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity



Welsh Portraits No 5: The band, Feedback, are Kenny Fu (left, lead guitar), Adam Davies (drums) and James Edwards (guitar and Geraint Lewis

of the population place on the principles of our NHS, and to introduce a Health Service Levy or every one in paid employment, graduated to income.

There always seems to be Treasury resistance to a hypothecated tax, but there would be general understanding of the reasoning behind a levy specifically dedicated to the NHS.

We cannot afford to overlook the strength of opinion which wishes the NHS to be in a position to meet its obligations, and is prepared to contribute towards achieving them.

PETER F JONES
Aberdeen
The writer is Emeritus Clinical Professor of Surgery, University of Aberdeen

Sir: Since 1948 the NHS has been a talisman of society's altruism, and part of an image of the future. However, the recent beds, staff and funding crises highlighted by your leading article of 6 January indicate that the NHS is the first area where society as a whole is having to come to terms with the manifold shortages.

Government and people are starting to address the global problem of how to manage any commodity for which there is an unlimited demand but only a finite supply. The NHS today, housing, energy and food tomorrow?

Dr CERI BROWN
Morpeth,
Chestire

Sir: Your leading article of 6 January states clearly why voters who "want to spend more on the NHS... will have to meet the costs". Now is the time for the Government to take advantage of the value which the great majority

Out of school

Sir: Instead of the Government pursuing its ludicrous attempt to persuade the travel industry to abandon its promotion of cheap holidays during school terms, why does no one suggest the staggering of school holidays by county or region? In Germany, for example, the six weeks of summer holiday are allocated regionally from the beginning of June to mid September, and main examinations are sat in the spring.

Such a change would both alleviate our diabolical traffic congestion and remove exam fever to a time of year with fewer distractions and less likelihood of a heat wave to torture examinees and invigilators.

Mrs JANE VALENTINE
Maldon, Essex

Sir: Congratulations on your accurate and appropriate reporting of the royal engagement (In Brief, 7 January). I trust that this scale of coverage will continue for the wedding if it takes place.

MARGARET TOMLINSON
Knotbury, Shropshire

Sir: I was interested to see that a French lawyer intends to sue Fidel Castro for "crimes against humanity" (report, 7 January). No doubt the charge

Sir: While much is being made of pupil absenteeism during term time, I wonder about problems caused by absent teachers. Today is the second day of term and so far my son has had two of his A-level classes cancelled – three periods in total. Since he began Year 12 he has been forced to miss an average of between one and two lessons per week. I wonder whether his school is typical.

MICHAEL COYLE
London N21

Sir: School is not the only environment where children learn; they can gain a lot from being part of a family (of all shapes and sizes). Yet the British work ethic can often mean that one or both of the parents are away during all of a child's waking hours.

The Government should

channel its energies into challenging the travel industry's insistence upon raising prices during every state school holiday period. This practice forces many families to make an unnecessary and uneasy choice between formal education and the only chance for the family to holiday together.

SARAH J CARTER
Colchester, Essex

Pension promise

Sir: Professor Walter Elkan (letter, 6 January) is quite right that means testing is very difficult and expensive to administer.

If the Government were to honour its promise that pensioners will share in the prosperity of the country and start increasing the state pension, with restoration of the earnings link, to

a level that enabled pensioners to live an independent life, there would be no need for handouts, or means testing for a proud generation who willingly paid their tax and National Insurance to look after people older and younger than themselves in the expectation they in turn would have dignity in their later years.

CLIFFORD FULLER
Churchdown, Gloucestershire

Sunstroke

Sir: It is undeniable that popular astrology helps to sell newspapers at this time of year, but John Walsh ("What planet are you on?", 5 January) gets it wrong when he says that "all the signs are that horoscopes have a future". In Britain astrologers can be prosecuted under the Fraudulent Mediums Act, 1951, although this has not, so far, happened.

There are serious differences, too, between academic astrologers. Professor Dawkins dismisses the art as "pre-Copernican dabblings". I am a post-Copernican astrologer. I wonder what he would make of that?

Because of my views I am currently banned as a "heretic" by the Astrological Association. It happened after I successfully predicted some early effects of this year's big eclipse using methods that give pride of place to the Sun.

HELEN BEST
London W4

IN BRIEF

with this. The City trades in the euro as it does with all other currencies – like the dollar – and makes a profit. Why don't we just leave well alone?

PETER DUVET
Lowestoft, Suffolk

Sir: I was interested to see that a French lawyer intends to sue Fidel Castro for "crimes against humanity" (report, 7 January). No doubt the charge

sheet will include eradicating most infectious diseases, raising the adult literacy rate to almost 100 per cent, reducing infant mortality rates to below that of the United States, increasing life expectancy from 59 to 76, providing free health care and education and feeding people of Cuba in the face of the longest and most vicious economic blockade the world has seen.

TONY GOSS
London SE15

sheet will include eradicating most infectious diseases, raising the adult literacy rate to almost 100 per cent, reducing infant mortality rates to below that of the United States, increasing life expectancy from 59 to 76, providing free health care and education and feeding people of Cuba in the face of the longest and most vicious economic blockade the world has seen.

TONY GOSS
London SE15

And he has come to grief, and feels that grief. As a drowning sailor, sinking on a reef. Tony: You never liked him much, I see that now! You're glad of his comeuppance, you old cow!

Queen: He stole you from me! Can you not see that? My influence on you was by him squashed flat! Where I your only confidante had formerly been, I found myself replaced by this young queen!

Tony: I see it all! And so you told the press About his loan, and made this awful mess!

Queen: You cannot prove I told a living soul. I may have done – but other heads will roll!

Tony: What other heads? What is this double dealing?

Queen: Expect the head of brave Sir Charlie Whelan

To be brought before us, steaming on a platter.

Tony: Charles Whelan? Why him?

Queen: It does not matter. No one will know my hand in all of this.

Now, sire, to the Seychelles and Christmas bliss!

More of this on Monday, I hope.

Sir Peter's pale head rolls at the feet of Queen Cherie

I AM often asked if there is any more of the rediscovered Shakespearean play *The History of King Tony or New Labour's Lost, Love*. Indeed there is, and to prove it here is the part of the play which covers the previous month and proves that, even for great ones, Christmas is not always without its troubles.

King Tony's country palace at Chequers. King Tony helps Queen Cherie to pack for the royal retinue prior to its departure for foreign parts.

King Tony: Be sure to take the secret telephones which link us to our loyal courtiers.

Queen: How many of these phones are there to take?

Tony: There's one for our most loyal Sir Alastair; Who, though he has a Scottish name, I trust. There's one for Mandelson, the peerless knight. There's one for Cook, Lord Robin of that name. To let him know where'er I bomb Iraq.

There's one which links me to American Bill.

To let me talk through everything he plans,

Arguing and testing his ideas...

Queen: Before you hand to him the unsigned cheque
Of your unstinting, spaniel-like approval...
And there's another here quite new to me.
The label says: "Hot line to Bernard Ingham".

Tony: Why, that's the bluff old Yorkshireman who served

Queen: Margaret in her former days of power!
How he'd bark and snarl at all the scribblers.

And afterwards they drank and laughed at him.
Saying his teeth were all of rubber made!

Queen: At least he always called a spade a spade.

Tony: That's all that he could do. He sounded frank

But all his speech was absolutely blank.

It is a precious gift, to speak your mind.

While keeping all that's relevant behind...

Queen: Shall I then jettison this telephone?

Tony: Yes, throw it out. But hold! Before you do

Let's play a little jest on that old man.

I'll ring him up and ask if he does wish

To be a panellist on *Question Time*.

He loves so much the art of belly chat.

He'll leap at it and never smell a rat!

MILES KINGTON

What sort of ghastly error
can you mean?

Explain yourself, my
enigmatic Queen

Queen: I will not let you play a trick like that!
Such things do come to haunt us afterwards.
Some little thing we recked not at the time

Will seem in retrospect a ghastly error.

Tony: What sort of ghastly error can you mean?

Explain yourself, my enigmatic Queen!

Before she can consider, one of the telephones rings.

Tony: Ah ha! The pale white telephone dings.

Betokening a call from Sir Peter Mandelson.

Pale and white like him, and smooth withal.

Perchance he rings to wish me Happy Christmas.

Queen: Answer the thing and find out if he does!

Tony: I will, I will... King Tony at your service.

Hello, Peter! Yes, and the same to you...

What's that you say? You ring to say good bye?

Your resignation's in the Christmas post?

What can you mean? Your loan has been found out?

What loan is this? From Lord G Robinson?

Hello, hello... The wretched line's gone dead!

I cannot credit what my ears have heard.

His voice was full of tears and husky grief.

I have not known him in this state before!

Queen: Of course you never have. Before this day

Sir Peter always caused distress to others.

He rose to the top by dint of others' tears.

But now at last his own luck disappears

THE
DEBORAH



Openness and democracy are the way to fight fraud

CLEAR AWAY the froth over fraud in the European Union's budget and three facts stand out. One is that this is a relatively small problem, not a large one. The bureaucracy of the European Commission is famously smaller than that of the Scottish Office, and its budget is one-fifth that of the British government's. The fact that £5bn out of a budget of £60bn cannot be properly accounted for is a disgrace, but only a fraction has been lost to dishonesty.

The second is that most of the EU's budget is spent by national governments. One of the reasons why devolution or "subsidiarity", the mantra of the Major government, never really caught on was because four-fifths of EU spending is already handled by member states.

The third is that fraud and waste are, sadly, to be expected in a budget that mostly takes the form of subsidies. Half of the EU's spending is still accounted for by the absurd Common Agricultural Policy, that original and monumental obstacle to the creation of an efficient and free market in Europe.

It is not at all clear how much of the missing billions has been stolen, wasted or simply lost track of, but it is plain that the attitude of the European Commission to the discrepancies is lamentable. For four years now, the Court of Auditors – the EU's spending watchdog – has refused to certify the union's accounts, although it accepts that most of the discrepancies are "honest mistakes". But the commission's response has been defensive and complacent. When the Dutch official Paul van Buitenen passed information to Euro MPs, complaining that evidence of fraud was being covered up, the instinct was to suspend, discipline and close ranks rather than to investigate. In fact, although he has made some wild allegations about the pressure put on him to keep quiet, he has also said: "I am not saying that the irregularities are widespread."

Not all the allegations bandied about in recent days about the financial interests of commissioners' wives survive a moment's scrutiny, but the frustration of Euro MPs is understandable. Instead of declaring a crusade against waste and fraud, commission president Jacques Santer goes into next week's vote of confidence in the European Parliament declaring: "I want to have a strong commission because we have a lot of work to be done in the future." Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu could have said the same.

However, the problem goes far beyond Mr Santer's unwise posture of aggrieved innocence. Europe needs to wean itself off the culture of subsidy, and quickly. More fundamentally, Europe needs a new constitution. Without clearer lines of accountability, Europe's institutions will never gain popular consent. The systems for electing Euro MPs are flawed (and not much improved in Britain by the



arrival of proportional lists), but the parliament does a reasonable job of scrutinising the commission, a role that should be strengthened. At present it lacks effective sanctions – apart from the "nuclear option" of sacking the entire commission on a two-thirds vote.

But the peoples of Europe need more readily identifiable democratic champions in Brussels who will fight for their interests. Jacques Delors' idea that each country should elect its commissioners directly has been overtaken by Europe's expansion, which requires the commission to be recast in any case. Robin Cook's plan for a "senate" of a small number of directly elected representatives from each country should be worked up instead.

The duty lies with national governments to come up with such mechanisms. Until the transparency and accountability of European institutions are improved, stories of fraud in EU budgets will only give succour to Eurosceptics, and undermine the consent of Europe's peoples upon which the health and strength of the Union depends.

A realistic approach to drink-driving

IF ANYONE were in doubt about the power of television, then the news that the number of drivers failing a breath test after an accident over the holidays has fallen by about one-fifth would be a convincing testament to the potential of "hard-hitting" publicity. The commercials shown at Christmas featuring reconstructions of horrifying drink-related accidents clearly played their part in, to adapt an earlier campaign's slogan, getting death off the roads. This success has focused attention once again on whether the time has now come to reduce the drink-driving limit. The evidence, however, suggests that such a move would have little effect.

When Barbara Castle introduced the breathalyser and the present drink-driving limit in 1967, the number of drink-

drive convictions doubled over the next five years. Since the Seventies, however, the numbers of positive breath test convictions, and drink-related injuries and fatalities, have all steadily fallen. This trend has been going on, it is important to stress, with precisely the same alcohol limit throughout. What do seem to have been effective are anti-drink-driving publicity and the resulting revolution in public attitudes.

This leaves the "hard core" of drivers who behave irresponsibly. Reducing the present permitted level of alcohol even to nil will not have much impact on them. We have a lower rate of road fatalities than the French, whose limit is a lot lower. Granting the police more arbitrary powers to stop drivers at random might catch a few, but this has some unattractive implications for civil liberties. Rural areas would suffer needlessly. Besides, if the traffic cops are determined enough to stop you, they will.

It may be an uncomfortable thought, but the "hard core" may always be with us.

My party is more ideologically united than I've ever known it



TONY BLAIR
There are bound to be setbacks. There are bound to be attacks. We will respond to them, robustly

parliamentary session. Bringing in the working families tax credit to help poorer families. Cutting youth unemployment. Helping small businesses. Improving relations with Europe and the world, so that Britain is no longer lost in isolation.

These are principles and practices which are now going into place around the world. South Africa, for instance, won praise for its tough economic measures, and for sticking to them. They're right. It's the only way. Today, I will be working to ensure the best links between Britain and South Africa, paying tribute to the extraordinary and visionary leadership of Nelson Mandela, and forging new relationships with Thabo Mbeki and others in the new job they will do for South Africa.

After 18 years, none of Britain's problems can be solved in the same number of months. That will take time. I know that in Britain, many people are

facing the future with apprehension, unsure of what it will bring. But I know too that if we work together to meet those challenges, we will defeat them. Nobody said it would be easy to rebuild Britain. Nobody ever went into government thinking that it would be a nice, easy, nine-to-five job. It takes resolve, determination, real grit and a sense of purpose and direction. That is what New Labour offers. That is what I offer. Strong leadership. Real leadership. Leadership the country wants and deserves.

Strong leadership is not an end in itself. It is for the purpose of making every family better off and giving every child a chance. Those are worthwhile goals. But they are tough goals. There are bound to be setbacks. We will face them, determinedly. There are bound to be attacks. We will respond to them, robustly. That means that we will continue to concentrate not on the politics of scandal and gossip, but on the politics of the fundamentals and of the big picture – getting on with the job we were elected to do. That will be clear in the new proposals we will be bringing forward shortly on the wide range of issues we outlined in our legislative programme. It will be clear in the Budget. It will be clear in the series of speeches which ministers will be giving on what the Government is doing, starting with David Blunkett today when he makes it clear that we will not tolerate local education authorities which fail and let down our children.

And we will make a difference because we will carry on putting forward a sustained programme of modernisation, and because we will carry on offering Britain the new politics on which we were elected. We will continue to offer confidence, direction, vision and optimism. After years of the Tories giving none. We will continue to be for the many, not the few. We will continue to offer leadership, not drift. We will continue to be for the future, not for the past. We will continue to govern. And we will continue to govern as New Labour.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"We are not yet in a federal state."
Jacques Santer,
President of the European Commission

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Water, taken in moderation, cannot hurt anybody."
Mark Twain,
American writer

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MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
The South African press comments on Tony Blair's visit to their country

ter and his government to erase the painful past that has haunted Africans by getting involved in efforts to revive this continent. If Blair apologises for the 27,000 women and

children who died in British concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer War, as demanded by the Herstigte Nasionale Party, he should go all the way and apologise to the rest of Africa for British slavery and colonisation. We also expect Blair to use his country's influence within the European Union to ensure that South African products gain access to those lucrative markets sooner rather than later.

The Star

THE VISIT of Tony Blair will be an opportunity to build on the new relationship with South Africa which began after the 1994 elections. The word "new"

AS BRITISH Prime Minister Tony Blair arrives, spare a thought for President Nelson Mandela, his deputy Thabo Mbeki and a number of ministers who are interrupting well-earned breaks to provide a sunny and telegraphic backdrop for a troubled politician from the north. Still, whatever Blair's motivation, there is serious work to be done during his visit. As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Coun-

cil, the UK is an important partner for SA in developing a viable international response to the crises in the Congo and Angola. As to the arms and investment package: Blair and his spin doctors are not the investors in the UK private sector. Any promises they make will have to be nailed down in detailed, wearying negotiations. *Business Day*.

THE VISIT provides a good opportunity for the prime minis-

PANDORA

ANOTHER DECORATIVE scandal has hit the House of Commons: its bins are being refurbished. Some MPs' bins have been removed and are destined to come back dressed up with the House of Commons portcullis, repainted in the Commons shade of green. Although not quite on the scale of Lord Irvin's wallpapering last year, the move has caused dismay to some insiders. "The temporary bins they've given us are much better," one Parliamentary researcher informed Pandora. The nation's business continues apace.

THE WHITE gold used in Sophie Rhys-Jones's engagement ring flashed from newspaper pages yesterday, along with the fact that it broke the tradition of using yellow Welsh gold in Royal rings. However, Prince Edward's decision to opt for white gold may have been less revolutionary than it appeared and more a matter of expediency. The last gold mine in Wales, Gwynfynydd, is closing down with the loss of five jobs. The source of the gold used in Royal wedding rings, the mine has been in existence since the 1880s. Its closure is due to the local council's failure to allow the owners to expand the parking area for the visitors centre - a prime source of income for the enterprise. In the meantime, a Buckingham Palace spokesman told Pandora: "We have a nugget that was donated to the Queen in 1981 and it has been estimated there is enough for three more rings." Is this an omen that will light bonfires in the hearts of British republicans everywhere?

SIR ARTHUR C Clarke's endorsement of the claim that the world has got the date wrong for the approaching Millennium could have some happy consequences. The world's most popular science-fiction writer and author of 2001: A Space Odyssey recently noted that: "We will have had only 99 years of this century by January 1, 2000. We will have to wait until December 31, 2000, for the full hundred." Think, for example, how encouraging this could be to those responsible for building London's Jubilee Line extension, who have always promised to have it completed in time for the Millennium. For a start, they could tell those workers demanding extra incentive bonuses just where to go -

back on the job. Indeed, Pandora suggests that the opening of the Millennium Dome itself be postponed for a year, giving its new boss, Lord Falconer, plenty of time to scrap its ridiculous, tatty pop-culture contents and replace them with exhibits of genuine cultural and intellectual importance.

DISCUSSING THE advantages of reaching the age of 75, novelist Norman Mailer was as intrepid as ever when he claimed that his flagging memory had actually improved his writing. "I have to admit that most mornings I say to myself, 'What idiot wrote this mess?'" He continued, "I feel totally impartial, as if I were reading the work of a stranger, so it makes it much easier to cut out stuff and to shorten it."

HUGH GRANT (pictured) has revealed that he gets "tremendous enjoyment" from the failure of other famous people. Grant, who co-stars with Julia Roberts in the forthcoming film version of Peter Mandelson's neighbourhood, *Notting Hill*, says that he knows that for celebrities "there are only two stories: success or humiliation". He confesses: "I've always enjoyed that cruelty when it's focused on other people." Let's hope Hugh enjoys it as much as everyone else enjoyed his divine humiliation in *Los Angeles* just a few years back.

THE SHOW trial of President Clinton will have to try very hard not to be eclipsed by the bizarre sideshow that porn-king Larry Flynt is promising. After advertising in *The Washington Post* a \$1m reward for anyone who could prove that they had conducted extramarital affairs with members of Congress, Flynt's first victim was Representative Bob Livingston, who resigned before he could become Speaker of the House when he discovered that Flynt's *Hustler* magazine was about to publish details of his sexual philandering. Now Flynt is set to hold a press conference next week at which he will reveal, he claims, a long list of naughty US politicians. In the meantime, Flynt recently told *The Boston Globe* that he was reconsidering his reward payment for the women who grappled with Bob Livingston, because the politician resigned before *Hustler* hit the news-stands.

Excuse me, ma'am, they're our pictures

THINGS ARE changing down at Buckingham Palace. The latest news in the long-running saga of the loosening of relations between the court and the public came this week. The Queen's collection of art is to be made more accessible to the general public, with the construction of a new gallery, twice the size of the present one, to be opened in 2002. The new gallery will allow visitors to see many more of the highlights of the collection than before, at a cost of "between £24 and £28 a head".

Well, can I chase my aunt Fanny round a mulberry bush. Is this supposed to be good news? A few more examples of the colossal royal collection, grudgingly offered to the view for a startlingly steep entrance charge, and we are expected to be grateful?

The Queen's collection of art is truly astonishing affair; tens of thousands of drawings, paintings, sculptures, objects, treasures from every corner of the world and every imaginable school of art. There are spectacular and famous highlights of the vast hoard - the drawings are a particularly celebrated collection - but it is absolutely stuffed with re-



PHILIP HENSHER
The Royal Collection is not the Queen's art; it belongs to the state, which means you and me

condite treasures. It is of incalculable interest and value but, like an iceberg, remains largely unseen: the small parts of the royal palaces that the public can visit, and the small exhibitions that the Queen's Gallery at Buckingham Palace puts on, can hardly begin to suggest the riches of the collection.

We are always expected to be grateful that the Queen puts any of

her art on public display at all. There is no obligation, it is suggested, for a private owner even of people quite interested in Mogul painting, had seen the *Padshahnama* before, and, since it is shortly to be rebound and shovved back on a shelf in Windsor Castle, whether

they will do so again.

And, for most private owners, this would be the case. But the Queen is not a private citizen, and the Royal Collection is not a private collection. For every reasonable purpose, it is a public collection; not the possession of a family, but something belonging to the head of state. It is frankly deplorable that things that have been acquired by, or given to, a head of state solely by virtue of that position should be treated as private property, to be seen in public rarely or not at all.

Take a single example. Last year, the Queen's Gallery exhibited one of the masterpieces of Mogul painting, the *Padshahnama*. It was being seen more or less for the first time in public; it was possible to exhibit the cycle of paintings because a decision had been made to rebound the volume that contains the work. The volume having been taken apart, the paintings could be

separately displayed. I very much doubt whether anyone much even people quite interested in Mogul painting, had seen the *Padshahnama* before, and, since it is shortly to be rebound and shovved back on a shelf in Windsor Castle, whether

they will do so again. But how did the *Padshahnama* come to be in the possession of the Queen? Well, it was given to George III by the Nawab of Oudh in 1799. I dare say George III was jolly pleased to be given such a nice book but the idea that he was given it because he was particularly interested in Mogul painting is completely absurd. He was given the fabulously valuable treasure because he was head of a powerful state, and the treasure properly belongs not to his descendants, but to the state itself.

And this is true even when we look at things that were acquired, and not simply donated. In almost every case, the monarch, if he had a taste for art, was in a position to acquire things solely by means of his position. The magnificent collection amassed by Charles I is certainly evidence of his good taste and judgement. But he was still not a

private collector, and his powers of acquisition must be put down to the eagerness of others to get paintings into the collection of the King of England, Scotland and Ireland.

There is, frankly, not very much in the Royal Collection that can be regarded as a private possession

Why do we still ignore the screams of abused children?



YASMIN ALIBHAI-BROWN
There is a child I know who I feel is being abused, but I have sat on my conscience for months

CHILDREN ARE much better off than they were a century ago. They are seen and heard, especially when they have cuts and bruises on their bodies, and they scream with pain and confusion as the people they love and trust abuse them. Only, it seems, far too many of us prefer to ignore these sights and sounds, and carry on regardless.

It's time to sober up. Babies in Britain are more likely to be killed today than 10 years ago. Those under the age of 12 months are five times more likely to end up murdered than those in other age groups. Between April 1997 and March 1998, 82 children were killed by adult abusers. They were beaten to death, starved, strangled, suffocated or tortured to death. This week Professor Sir Roy Meadows, of the Leeds Infirmary, said that, in his view, that number could be even higher because murdered babies are sometimes misdiagnosed as cot death cases. And, as general homicide rates continue to rise, the potential danger to children increases year by year.

The number of murders in Britain, according to newly released Home Office figures, has more than doubled since the mid-Sixties, with 1995 being the worst year so far. These figures were released at the same time as an National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) research report indicating that too many people take no action for months, even years after they become aware of the possibility that a child they know may be at risk.

The research was carried out between 14 and 20 December when calls to the NSPCC helpline were analysed. Of the 173 calls which were considered serious by experts, only 25 per cent were made by people within 24 hours of the caller's first having concerns. Almost one in four

of the callers had waited six months, and one in seven had waited a year, before making that vital call.

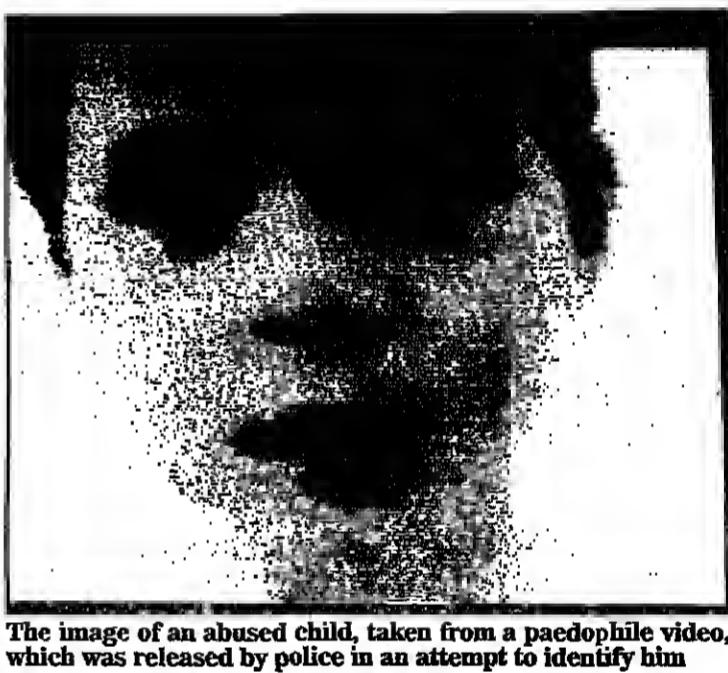
Asked why they had not reported their concerns earlier, fear of reprisal was the main reason given. Others said that they were unsure of how serious the situation was, or initially did not want to get involved. Evidence from inquiries into child killings shows clearly that there are always signs of cruelty and neglect suffered by victims before their death. As long as we have such "silent witnesses", as the NSPCC call them, frightened, suffering children will continue to be victims, and some will die as a result.

Those who do take action are not heroic. They are no different from you or me, except that they are social beings whose instincts to protect the next generation prevail more strongly over that other instinct for pure self-preservation. When people say that they are afraid of reprisals, what exactly are they scared of? Of not being able to borrow a cup of sugar? Of paint on the car? Of screams and insults across the wall

maintained fences? Of physical attacks in dark corridors of housing estates? Some of these are real dangers, others are not. A realistic assessment, maybe with the help of the police or one of the child protection agencies, might release some people from their own sense of vulnerability. Most ordinary people remain unaware of the impressive standards of confidentiality and sensitivity that permeate child protection work.

But maybe the fears go deeper. One case in the NSPCC dossier is that of a mother who waited 12 months before talking about her suspicion that her ex-husband was sexually abusing her five-year-old daughter. She may have been afraid of him, but could it also be that, like so many of us, she was loth to accept how foul human beings can be towards their own children? We feel safer in a world where the only villains are strangers in the woods who spirit away our innocent young and deliver them back dead. We recoil from the reality that greater dangers lie not with those strangers we have taught the fears not to trust, but those from whom they happily and rightly expect sweets.

Over the years, the excitable public responses to the investigations of widespread abuse of children by their families indicate how unprepared we are to deal with the realities. The journalist Bea Campbell has written compellingly about the effects of this hysterical need not to know, and how the conspiracy of ignorance is maintained. The truth of what happened in Cleveland and other well publicised cases of mass abuse has been buried away because such facts, properly acknowledged, would send us mad. Perhaps these are our own 20th-century sacrifices. We quietly allow a few children to be physically and psychologically de-



The image of an abused child, taken from a paedophile video, which was released by police in an attempt to identify him

stroyed in order to keep good all those myths, fairy tales and magic for the rest.

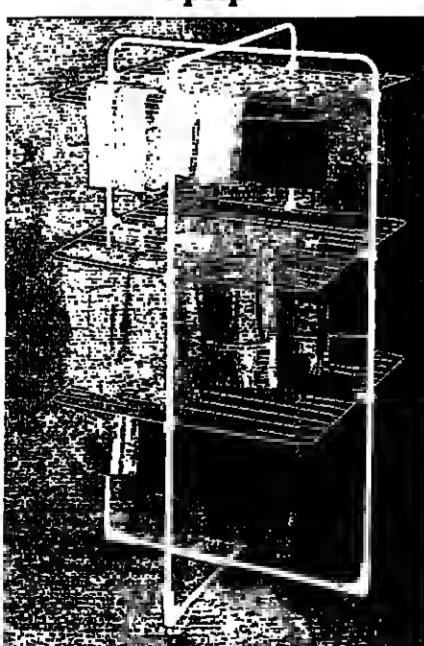
There are social impediments to getting involved, too, none of which have anything to do with people being selfish or indifferent. There is that fact agreement among people that the home is a private kingdom and that parents have ownership rights over those they have brought into the world.

The privatisation of family life has probably been one of the most damaging effects of urbanisation and the break-up of communities that has occurred over the past three centuries. Children should belong to a society - by which I don't mean the confessional policies once rift in Communist countries, but in the sense that the wellbeing and development of every child should be an inescapable joint responsibility. In

Africa they say it takes a village to raise a child. Hillary Clinton is so impressed with this simple truth that she has been promoting the idea all around the United States, when she talks about health and welfare. If we learn to accept this idea, we shall more easily interfere with the way parents are treating their offspring. It must be terrible to be falsely accused of hurting your children. But that is a price we should all agree to pay to safeguard the nation's children. I would feel better knowing that my children were protected from me if I ever maltreated them because there are strangers who would take the risk of offending me in order to protect my young. I am about to take that risk myself. There is a child I vaguely know who I feel is being abused. I have sat on my conscience for seven months. I will make that phone call today.

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We are all philosophers now



PODIUM
CATHERINE MCCALL

From a lecture by the philosopher to the Royal Society for the Arts, Manufactures and Commerce in London

are not susceptible to physics, they are highly suitable topics for philosophical inquiry.

Problematic situations can often result from inconsistencies between concepts that have been created by human thought. For example, during a community project with mothers and children, one of the topics that emerged from the initial questions concerned

housing. Do people have rights over where they can live? Does anyone have the right to evict a family, or to force families to move to an area in which they don't want to live?

One participant stated that it is unfair that people who want to move cannot. If you are not a drug addict or an alcoholic, if you don't beat your children, you have no priority on the list - you are doomed to live and try to bring up your children in the midst of crime and drugs.

This was a particularly topical issue as one of the participants had to miss the session because her six-year-old son had stepped on a needle on the landing outside the door to their flat. The boy had to get treatment for possible hepatitis, and everyone was worried about his contracting AIDS.

The dialogue continued with another participant who disagreed that everyone should have an equal right on the housing list, because the children in most need have to have priority.

As the discussion proceeded the group uncovered a conflict between the concept of "equity" and the concept of

"need". With limited housing available, you cannot both give abused children priority and treat everyone equally.

It seemed insoluble. The housing authority (the council) cannot overcome this conflict - not because the housing authority is uncaring or corrupt, but because in this situation the two concepts of equity and need are in conflict. The problems were about ideas.

Being able to uncover these philosophical concepts in the real situation, and then being able to place these concepts upon a kind of conceptual map and to reason about them, enabled the mothers to have a much fuller and better understanding of the nature of the problem - and the nature of this real problem is philosophical.

It is eminently practical to be as critical as possible of our theories - prior to, and during, the time in which they are implemented. For we have the advantage of being able to let our theories die in our stead. But in order to do so we need practice in recognising and understanding theory without which had theory lives uncriticised and people suffer.

The myth of sexual freedom



DEBORAH ORR

The pill is the greatest invention of the 20th century, but the capacity for confusion is infinite

THERE CAN be few women today who are not familiar with the scenario in which a stricken friend confesses that she fears herself to be the bearer of an unwanted child. The situation might not seem rich with comic possibilities, but even in the most unhappy of dilemmas, sometimes you have to laugh.

Take my chum – let's call her Rachel – who had had a brief romance with her flatmate. The flirtation was over, but the consequences were just beginning. Rachel was full of bitter recrimination. She was angry with herself, for although recent health scares had prompted her to come off the pill, she had made no attempt to discuss alternative contraception with her sexual partner – let's call him Tom. And she was angry with him, for he had not taken the birth-control initiative either.

But when she confronted him, she got something of a surprise. Tom displayed amazement that Rachel could be pregnant, and demanded to know how this could have happened. She countered with a few sarky remarks about men, women, unprotected sex and gooseberry bushes, only to have the wind taken completely out of her sails when Tom asked her if she was mentally disturbed. Why had she been so irresponsible as to tell him she was on the pill when quite frankly she wasn't?

Gobsmacked, Rachel retorted that she'd done no such thing. While she was willing to admit that their failure to discuss contraception was as much her fault as his, Tom's weaselly attempt to shuck off all responsibility was utterly contemptible. Outraged, Tom gasped that on the very first night they had slept together, Rachel had left his bedroom and gone into her own, announcing that she was off to get her pill.

A horrible realisation came upon Rachel. She had indeed enacted the scene which Tom described. But one small detail was wrong. She hadn't nipped into her bedroom to take her pill. She had popped next door to grab her pillow. Laugh? We didn't stop till we got to the abortion clinic. That soon wiped the grins off our faces.

According to Professor Carl Djerassi, inventor of the contra-



It didn't take long, after the pill was first licensed in the Sixties, for women to realise that the advantages were more obvious for men than for them

MSI

ceptive pill, there are nearly one million conceptions every day. Half of these, he says, are unplanned, half of those, unwanted. He also asserts, and on the evidence it is difficult to argue with him, that birth control is not a priority any more.

Birth control, more specifically the pill, has got to be the single most important invention of the 20th century. First sexual liberation, then feminism, and now the remaking of our ideas about family structure in the West, all began with the advent of the oral contraceptive. But as Rachel learned to her cost, the capacity for confusion packed into this little tablet of hormones seems almost infinite.

First, women are confused about the threat the pill poses to their health. And the release yesterday of a new study by the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, is not likely entirely to calm their fears. Yes, the report confirms, death from thrombosis, stroke, heart attacks and breast cancer are slightly more common among women who are taking the pill. But within 10 years of coming off it, the threat of death from these

diseases disappears completely. Of course this is good news, particularly for those women who took the pill for extended periods before the health risks were understood. But how much does it help women like Rachel, who are concerned with both their health and their sexual freedom in the here and now, and also clearly feel some resentment that contraception is assumed by their sexual partners to be only their responsibility? More broadly, how much has the pill, which let men off the sexual hook so much, helped women in their search for liberation at all?

At the beginning of the Sixties, when the pill was first licensed in the US, then Britain, it immediately began to change the West. And the sexual revolution wasn't too far advanced before women began to realise that the advantages of this easy new contraception were far more obvious for men than they were for women. Control of their fertility made women immediately more sexually available, but at the same time demanded the surrender of the ace up their skirt when it

came to brokering a place in a man's world. Enter feminism, and the far-from-over battle to secure equality between women and men. But right from the start there was a contradiction. While a feminist agenda enabled women to take full advantage of the new control they had over their bodies, it also made equality in the bedroom harder to achieve, as all responsibility for contraception was summarily dumped into the arms of women.

So look at us now. Birth rates in Western Europe have fallen below replacement levels, and one of the crises of the next century will be the burden placed by the old on the young. Meanwhile, teenage pregnancy is rising, within a moral climate so bitter that when Boots opened a clinic offering free contraception to under-age girls, it caused outrage. Further, while feminism's support of female-headed single-parent families has become an article of faith, the truth is that for many women this is not a choice. It's easy for Emma Thompson to declare, as she did recently, that "single mothers are our brave

heroines". But often, single mothers feel far from brave and heroic. Instead they feel abandoned and betrayed, not to mention stressed-out, knackered, lonely and skirt.

The social pressure on men to take parental responsibility for their children diminishes daily, often driven by women who reject the importance of fatherhood. Meanwhile, we scratch our heads in puzzlement as we wonder how to inculcate schoolboys with a sense of responsibility about contraception. Or wouldn't it help to rope them into sharing responsibility for the results of unprotected sex? Maybe we could do it by telling them what kind of toll bringing up a family alone can really extract from a woman and her children. Instead of making out that single motherhood is a great leap forward in human evolution.

It may seem far-fetched to lay all of this sexual and procreative confusion at the door of the oral contraceptive, but that overlooks the psycho-sexual impact of this 40-year-old wonderdrug. Despite the best efforts of feminism, despite the health scares which have driven women off the pill in droves, despite even the threat of Aids, male and female attitudes to contraception don't appear to have changed since the moment the pill arrived, bringing with it the implicit assertion that contraception was now simple, and that no one need worry no more. It is as if the very existence of the pill protects us from pregnancy. Actually swallowing one every day, or enquiring as to whether one's partner is doing so, seems like an unimportant detail.

Worse, this abdication of sexual responsibility has by no means increased women's sexual power. It isn't just youngsters who fail to grasp that sex means babies. Since health scares about the pill reached their peak in 1995, abortion rates among middle-aged women have soared. What are we to do? The sexual and feminist revolutions of the last 40 years have been based on a fallacy – that women have gained control over their bodies and their fertility and that men don't need to fret any more. We haven't, and you do. It is about time we all faced this simple fact.

RIGHT OF REPLY

PETER YORK



The social critic responds to a piece by Anne McElvoy on his research into career women

ANNE MCALVOY is clearly two people – Anne Spiegels and Elvira McElvoy. Anne Spiegels read the article about our research among senior women and chose to misunderstand it and generate some funny copy.

She says that we concluded that women pass through the glass ceiling in a *mystical* way. But we didn't and they don't – they just don't spend a lot of time agonising about it – they've been too busy doing something very well.

She also attributes to us the notion that *miracle women* have learnt not to be too intense and ambitious. We didn't say that. We said that our successful women told us that young women now tend to be too intense and ambitious *for its own sake*. Ambitious? Of course they're ambitious – to achieve and contribute and get rewards – not just to have "drama, excitement and the *acclaim of millions*", as we used to say at school.

The idea that Peter York would outlaw dressing up is mad. Peter York's preferred dress code for women is formal, produced and done up to the nines. Again, we simply observed that power dressing wasn't what these women did. They were aware that how they look matters but, by either instinct or good sense, knew that "in your face" dressing up can look slightly ridiculous to real-world inhabitants of fashionland.

But then the other personality, clever Elvira, takes over and produces some perfectly sensible observations. Then she ends by reverting to a bit of Lee-Potterism with a revelation of the kind served up as wisdom by fathers of brides at buffers' weddings.

Anyone who, like me, makes his living studying social trends has been living with the amazing thought that women are people too for an awful long time.

A literary life cruelly exposed

FRIDAY BOOK

JOHN LEHMANN: A PAGAN ADVENTURE
BY ADRIAN WRIGHT, DUCKWORTH, £20



the lifelong tensions between Rosamond and John to an early incestuous episode.

Incest apart, Lehmann's first sexual experience was with a billeted Belgian, as a boy in the First World War. Such emotional core as this book possesses derives from its account of Lehmann's subsequent homosexual quest (a middle-aged affair with the wife of the French ambassador being the sole exception). His behaviour was extraordinarily self-deluding. He wrote that he was "always looking for the friend who will give me the direct, warm and natural, entirely loyal relationship that I dream about". And yet, after a failed student relationship with Michael Redgrave (who described himself, with justice, as "at times hideously immoral"), and an unrequited

attraction to Christopher Isherwood, he sought out men who, for reasons of age, class or income, could never be his equals.

He saw his liaisons with hustlers, such as those to whom Isherwood introduced him in the boy bars of Berlin, as acts of class rebellion. A more honest description would be sexual tourism. His emotional life was further complicated when Adrian Liddell Hart introduced him to sadomasochism, waking long-dormant impulses of which he was both ashamed and afraid. Later in life, his affections were split between a series of secretaries, such as Jeremy Kingston, his "chunky Ganymede", and stock figures at the rougher end of the sexual market.

Even in his sixties, as a visiting professor in America, he was having affairs with his students, among them President Johnson's cousin. The one constant in his life was the ballet dancer Alexis Rassine, a partner of Margot Fonteyn, who shared his home for far longer than he shared his bed, but remains elusive in this book.

Lehmann's literary life suffered from the same diffuseness as his sexuality. He articulated his key dilemma: "Was I to be the impresario of other people's creative work or a creative writer myself?" But the question was academic. To his profound sorrow, neither his poetry nor his fiction made a real impact. Discussing his auto-biographical novel, *In the Purely Pagan Sense*, Wright refers to his "dead-banded prose, his almost William McGonagall talent for the flat phrase, the over-ready adjective". Only his memoir, *The Whispering Gallery*, could bear comparison with the works of the writers he promoted. Instead, his achievement lay as an editor and publisher, particularly of the various anthologies he founded, including *Penguin New Writing* and the *London Magazine*.

Wright succeeds in his desire to show Lehmann's central place in English literary life, from Bloomsbury to Fitzrovia. What is less sure is his ability to make him a figure of interest in



Lehmann's early love, Michael Redgrave

his own right. Wright repeatedly compares him to Cyril Connolly, whose reputation he believes to have unjustifiably eclipsed Lehmann's. Yet, as biographical subject, there is no disputing Connolly's pre-eminence. It is disappointing, after his splendid biography of L.P. Hartley, that Wright fails to bring Lehmann fully into focus.

It is as though the lacunae in Hartley's life stimulated Wright's imagination, whereas the sheer weight of the Lehmann archive overwhelmed it. The underlying problem of Lehmann's life – that, both privately and professionally, it simply repeated the same patterns – is echoed in his biography. In the absence of any substantial body of creative work, the literary side dwindles into a list of contributors and a résumé of the problems of running small magazines. On the emotional side, the detailed account of transitory loves suffers from the same leadenness that Wright censures in *In the Purely Pagan Sense*. Removing Lehmann from the indices and footnotes to the centre of the page, Wright has left him cruelly exposed.

MICHAEL ARDITI

THIS WEEK IN THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY



Michael Heseltine will be back. His old friend Julian Critchley explains why

An honest estate agent: where to find the best and smallest flats on the net

Jeremy Clarke goes to France to catch a boar

FRIDAY POEM

FROM 'UP FOR AIR'
BY DAVID HARSENT

Imagine two men, one of whom, after all, must have been myself. Imagine some small bird, perhaps a wren, bumping the infinite structure of the rose window again and again, in something like rapture, while the men rope up towards the borehole, nose to nose, seeming to cling to the mere idea of themselves. Got the picture?

Well, imagine part of the tackle failing, as if some fickle hand had chosen to loose its grip and wag a finger at the whole mad enterprise. Imagine the look in his eyes, that other man, imagine his frozen cry, the sound of less than nothing at all, as he pitches up against the flagstones in the Lady Chapel.

A Bird's Idea of Flight (Faber, £7.99) by David Harsent is shortlisted for the T S Eliot Prize, to be announced on Monday. The shortlisted authors will read this Sunday at the Almeida Theatre, London N1 (box office: 0171 359 4404)

Michel Petrucciani

"MY PHILOSOPHY," said Michel Petrucciani, "is to have a really good time and never to let anything stop me from doing what I want to do."

Nothing unusual about that, one might think. But, since Petrucciani was an adult standing only three feet high and weighing 55 pounds, one might expect his ambitions to have been, so to speak, closer to the ground. Had he not aspired to achievements above his station, he might have chosen to play something more convenient such as the harmonica rather than the piano, and music would have missed one of the most powerful jazz pianists of the last two decades.

One of the many remarkable things about Petrucciani was not so much the fact that when he played he overcame his handicaps, but that one was not aware of their existence. He could do anything, and more than most of the best players of the day. He played across the full span of the grand piano's keyboard and, despite his tiny legs, was able to make full use of the instrument's pedals - the loud one was of particular importance to him.

He was one of the most passionate and extrovert of soloists and the aggressive hurdling of his up-tempo work established an exciting bond with his audience that pushed aside any thought that he never deserved sympathy. He certainly never looked for it. On the other hand, one could not regard as normal the sight of the half-moon of face peeping over the top of the instrument - which was all most audiences saw of him - and when the music carried him away his head looked like nothing so much as an apple bobbing in the ocean.

The son of the Sicilian jazz guitarist Antoine Petrucciani and his French wife Anne, Michel was born, in 1962, with *osteogenesis imperfecta*, more often known as glass

"When I was young," he said, 'I thought the keyboard looked like teeth. It was as though it was laughing at me. You have to be strong enough to make the piano feel little. That took a lot of work. The piano was strictly for classical studies - no jazz - for eight years. Sure, I resisted the tuition, but it paid off. Absolutely. Studying orthodox piano teaches discipline and develops technique. You learn to take your instrument seriously. But I did get tired of contests and competitions. The classical milieu was a little too bourgeois for my taste.'

Petrucciani once saw Arthur Rubinstein play. "His fingers moved so fast that it was like a Bugs Bunny cartoon. I realised then that I'd never be as good as that, so I stuck to being a jazz musician." When he was 10 Petrucciani began to absorb the piano playing of Bill Evans, who became the major influence on the first part of his career. He also retained his love of the works of Bach, Debussy, Ravel, Mozart and Bartók.

His first major professional appearance was at the annual outdoor jazz festival in the French town of Clouzat when he was 13. "That year's guest, trumpeter Clark Terry, needed a pianist for his set. Some one sent for me and Clark thought that I was just a kid and that some one must be playing a joke on him. So, kidding around, he picked up his horn and played mock hullabaloo music. I said 'Let's play the blues.' After I'd played for a minute he said 'Give me five!' and gave me a hug and that was it."

Although he had to be carried on stage for his performances, Petrucciani had powerful, long-fingered hands. When he travelled he took with him an extender that his family had devised to enable him to work

seven and his playing had improved, his father bought a better piano from a local doctor.

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David Bergen / Redferns

the foot pedals. Already playing

jobs all over France and at European

festivals, he moved to Paris when he

was 16, and in 1980 made his first

album, *Flash*, with a trio that included

his brother Louis. By now a star, he

traveled France to play duets with the

American alto saxophonist Lee

Konitz and later recorded with him.

Musically Paris was an ideal city

for a young jazz star Petrucciani had

problems there. "It was mostly to do

with drugs and weird women, but I

was lucky and got out safe." When he

was 18 he left for New York. He

didn't have the cash to pay for his air

ticket, but his father later made good

the bad cheque. When he had earned

enough money from working in New

York, Petrucciani left for California,

where he met his wife, Gilda Butta.

He also encountered Charles

Lloyd, a tenor saxophonist who had

been in vogue during the Sixties

when jazz and rock had first abutted.

Lloyd had then led a quartet that had

included Keith Jarrett and Jack de

Johnette, but had stopped playing

when his audiences decided that his

band was more fashionable than he

was. Now 15 years later, he was to

come out of retirement. Petrucciani

went to Lloyd's house in Big

Sur with a friend who was a drummer.

"I didn't even know who

Charles Lloyd was. He asked me to

play the piano and decided he wanted

to play with me." After generating

rave reviews up and down the

West Coast, they worked across

the world together for the next

two years and their appearance at

the Montreux Jazz Festival, issued

as an album, won them the 1982

Prix d'Excellence.

In 1983 the *Los Angeles Times*

chose Petrucciani as Jazz Man of

the Year and the Italian Government

Cultural Office, who presumably

had known about such things, selected

him as "Best European Jazz Musi-

cian". The French, not to be outdone,

awarded him the prestigious Prix

Django Reinhardt. In 1984 his solo

album *100 Hearts* achieved the

French equivalent of a Grammy

award, the Grand Prix du Disque -

Prix Boris Vian. The then virtuoso

trumpeter Freddie Hubbard invited

the pianist to join his All Star band

and Petrucciani also worked with the

tenorists Joe Henderson and Wayne

Shorter and guitarists Jim Hall and

John Abercrombie, all from the

front rank of American jazz musi-

cians. In 1986 he recorded at

Montreux with Shorter and Hall.

From 1989 to 1992 Petrucciani

worked with a quartet, often adding

a synthesiser player, Adam Holzman.

Petrucciani had retained his love of

Duke Ellington, and his idea was that

the synthesiser could bring the

sound of a big band, Ellington's, to

his quartet. Latterly he had worked

as a soloist, moving beyond the Bill

Evans influence to draw inspiration

from the work of Keith Jarrett and

to display an abundance of technique, and power to match Oscar Peterson in his prime.

"I don't believe in geniuses," he said. "I believe in hard work. Ever since I was a child I knew what I wanted to do and worked for that. But I have so much to do. I've done albums and worked with a lot of great musicians and I've still got time ahead of me to do so much more. It's very difficult for me to talk about myself and what has happened; so many different events. Eventually, when I get to be 75, I'll write a book on my deathbed.

"Sometimes I think someone upstairs saved me from being ordinary."

STEVE VOCE

Michel Petrucciani, pianist and composer: born Orange, France 28 December 1962; married (one son and one adopted son); died New York 6 January 1999.

Raleigh Radford

RALEIGH RADFORD was the last of the prodigies of British archaeology from the 1930s and the years following the Second World War who, along with the like of Mortimer Wheeler, Christopher Hawkes and Gordon Childe, dictated the intellectual progress of the subject.

Like others of his generation he was a polymath whose interests and research ranged from the prehistoric periods through to the Roman Empire and into the Middle Ages, and thence to more recent aspects of Balkan folk art. He was essentially international in outlook, with a profound knowledge of European sites and antiquities.

A student at the British Schools of Archaeology at both Athens and Rome, he was subsequently to become Director of the British School at Rome (1936-39). It was, however, in exploring the nature of Celtic monasticism together with the physical traces of early Christianity and its subsequent organisation during the early medieval period across the British Isles that Radford was a pioneer. He once declaimed at a conference in Orkney, "I am a Christian archaeologist."

Coming from a Devon family and with a father who was also a medievalist and fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, he was given traditional Devonshire names of Courtenay and Raleigh as well as Arthur, which was to be doubly significant as his interests developed. At the age of 10 his father took him to the excavations at Glastonbury and this was to influence his future.

He read History at Exeter College, Oxford, and it was while still an undergraduate that he excavated the Pinhoe Mound near Exeter and collaborated with the then Chief

Inspector of Ancient Monuments, C.R. Peers, at the excavations at Whitby Abbey. It was the beginning of a lifelong association with monuments in state care. After further travel in the Balkans and the excavation of the Westland Roman villa, Yeovil, Radford joined the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments, Office of Works, in 1939 becoming Inspector for Wales.

Outside Wales he was continuing to excavate sites mainly in Devon and Cornwall although the Roman

British School at Rome, continued with his British projects. He did nevertheless begin a new publication series at the school and supervised the completion of the south wing of the Edwin Lutyens-designed building.

There is a photograph of Radford in the school courtyard standing alongside Neville Chamberlain and Lord Halifax who had turned from their post-Munich deliberations with the Italian government to make a visit. At the outbreak of war in 1939 Radford had to close down the

excavations at Tintagel and Castle Dore.

He returned to Britain to work first in the BBC, then in the intelligence department of the Foreign Office, becoming Chief Intelligence Officer in the department of psychological warfare at Allied HQ in Algiers. He carried the rank of a staff Colonel.

After the war Radford returned to direct more excavations in the West Country before taking over the excavations at Glastonbury in 1951. Briefly, from 1946 to 1948, he was acting Secretary of the Welsh Royal Commission of Historical and Ancient Monuments. His activities then spread to Scotland, where he worked at Whitby Abbey and other early Christian sites before being invited to Orkney to investigate the Norse settlement of Birsay.

He was later to excavate at Pevensey, school which involved much burning of papers in the courtyard. He returned to Britain to work first in the BBC, then in the intelligence department of the Foreign Office, becoming Chief Intelligence Officer in the department of psychological warfare at Allied HQ in Algiers. He carried the rank of a staff Colonel.

Improving his play with the facilities at Millfield, Radford went on to the international scene. He was picked for the Davis Cup team in 1968, after winning the British Under 21 championship, but he was left on the side line for the match with France. His debut came the following year against Austria. In his build-up to this status he claimed many notable scalps in the various tournaments around the world. Among them were Mark Cox, Owen Davidson of Australia, Tom Okker, the Flying Dutchman, and Arthur Ashe, and Stan Smith before they became Wimbledon champions.

He went on to represent Britain in the Davis Cup, but perhaps his best achievement was to win the British Hard Court Championship in

Castle on the Isle of Man. His particular interest in early Christianity and what was then termed the Dark Ages led him deeply into Arthurian studies. It was unsurprising that he was one of the initiators in 1965 of the excavation of South Cadbury hill-fort in Somerset with its Arthurian associations.

All the while he produced a torrent of learned papers, excavations reports and guidebooks to national monuments. His versatility and intellectual power had already brought him fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries at the precocious age of 28. He was eventually to receive its highest award, the society's gold medal in 1972 and honorary doctorates at three universities. He was elected to the British Academy in 1986 and was a member of the German Archaeological Institute. He was given no fewer than three Festschriften, including one at 80 (*The Early South Western Church in West Britain and Ireland*, 1982), and another at 90 (*The Archaeology and History of Glastonbury Abbey*, 1991).

Radford's broad experience and practical involvement with the preservation and interpretation of monuments made his advice widely sought in official as well as archaeological circles. He served as a member of both the Royal Commissions on Historical Monuments for England and Wales and on the three Ancient Monuments Boards for England, Wales and Scotland. These were advisory bodies providing archaeological advice to the respective Ancient Monuments Inspectors and reporting to ministers.

Few individuals have been in such demand before or since. He served as President of the Royal Archaeological Institute, of the Cambridgeshire Archaeological Association, the Prehistoric Society and the Medieval Society and more locally of the archaeological societies of Cornwall, Devon and Somerset, and many local historical societies. He was always courteous and businesslike, as much at home in the committee room as on an excavation. His erudition was formidable, which could make him intimidating, but he was always stimulating. He could be, in the words of Stewart Cruden, "re-

morlessly informative". To the last he maintained his independent spirit, refusing medication unless accompanied by sherry.

Raleigh Radford was one of the great figures of 20th-century archaeology, never insular in viewpoint and with remarkable intellectual versatility, lecturing, contributing to discussions on site and at conferences. He will always be remembered standing before his audience, eyes closed,

Commodore Ben Rogers

BEN ROGERS was known to hundreds of thousands of schoolchildren in the 1960s, as captain of the British India Steam Navigation Company School Ships the *Dunera*, the *Devonia* and *Nevada*.

The eldest of the seven children of a West Country small farmer, Rogers ended up as the formidable and much respected Commodore of the BI Fleet. He was the epitome of all the good qualities that are associated with being a legendary sea-dog - a term in which he would describe himself with a deprecating chuckle.

Rogers's paternal grandfather, from West Country people from time immemorial, eloped to London and went in to the booming 19th-century building industry. He trained his four sons, one as a surveyor, another as a master carpenter, a third as a solicitor conveyancer and the fourth, Rogers's father, as salesman of the family business. Alas, the young man took to the bottle, egged on by clients, and was therefore despatched back to Devon and a small farm on the edge of Exmoor. All his life Rogers learnt from his father's experience, offering his distinguished guests (delicious) chilled white port, a less than potent beverage.

Born in 1906, at Bryanstone Farm, Newton Ferrers, acquired through his mother's ancient family farming connections, Ben Rogers got a sound education at West Buckland School, which gave him entrance to the Plymouth Navigational College. At 16, he went to sea as a British India cadet and spent the decade of the 1930s learning seamanship and the handling of Goanese and other Asian crews on ships such as the *Carpentaria* plying between the Persian Gulf, Mombasa and the ports of India and Australia.

As a member of the Royal Naval Reserve he transferred to the North Atlantic in 1939 and unusually for a reserve officer was given command of a frigate, HMS *Loch Fada*, from which in 1944 he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for sinking a U-boat.

At the end of hostilities he returned to British India and in 1950 he was given command of the 9,500-ton *Chindwara*. This was one of the company's cadet training ships, mostly engaged on the Britain-to-Australia passenger and cargo run.

From 1958 to 1960 he commanded the troopship *Dilwara*, one of the links making possible the east of Suez troop commitment in Singapore.

In 1960 British India faced a problem. The defence review carried out by Duncan Sandys and implemented by his successor as Defence Secretary, Harold Watkinson, endorsed the view of the Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer, Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Mountbatten and Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Dermot Boyle that it was better to move troops by air to the Far East than take up time on inevitably long sea voyages.

The result of this decision was that the purpose-built 12,500-ton troopship *Dunera* would come of government charter. The compensation agreed with BI was £5m, a generous sum. However, in those days BI, run by men such as Kenneth Macrae Campbell and John Sharpe and their parent company P&O, masterminded by Sir Donald Anderson and his brother Sir Colin Anderson, were more interested in developing their seagoing business and in obligations to their seagoing personnel than to accountants. Therefore, they developed a scheme for ship schools whereby pupils in term-time should be taken north for a 13-day cruise to ports such as Bergen, Oslo, Copenhagen, Hamburg and Amsterdam, or south to Corunna, Gibraltar and Lisbon.

Who better than to be the captain of their first ship, pioneering this scheme than Ben Rogers, who had proved himself as master of the



Rogers on the bridge of the school ship *Dunera*, demonstrating the practical application of maths

board I was only rebuked by him twice - once I was summoned to his cabin and told sternly: "I will not have anybody on my ship, you Tam, included, gossiping on my Tannoy - especially after lunch when many of the crew take a well-earned rest." I did not need to be told twice.

The second occasion was when he thought that I was giving a rather politically biased account of the Spanish Civil War from my left-wing point of view. Later he was to be seen

Advisory Committee. Now aged 90, Heelas tells of the great impression of friendship and belief in the ship school project which gave Birmingham heavyweight educational chiefs total confidence in Rogers and his ship's company taking their children for a fortnight in term-time.

One incident among many remained with Heelas. In the Bay of Biscay the Fentham Road Secondary Modern pupils were thrilled that the *Dunera* passed another ship adopted by their school. Rogers sent a signal from the school to the adopted ship and that was the introduction to many lessons on navigation and the practical use of mathematics.

Rogers understood the educational importance of experiencing the sea and indeed dormitory life for children leaving their homes usually for the first time. No voyage could be considered wholly satisfactory without one day at least of really rough weather and the consequent seasickness. Rogers's personality spread throughout the ship's company and they were happy to be pioneers in an educational project which not only gave them employment but also which they passionately believed was nationally worthwhile.

It is not only schoolchildren who will have fond memories. Many thousands of members of the National Trust for Scotland will remember the NTS voyages when *Dunera* was chartered for four-day cruises. In particular no one who was on board will forget the wonderment at the captain's daring in navigating between the stacks of St Kilda so that 1,000 people on deck could have a unique view of the rocks and the seabird life.

Rogers spent 30 years of retirement within a mile of the place where he was born in Newton Ferrers, sad at the loss of his beloved Helen in 1991. There, in September, at the age of 92, he died quietly. His death went unreported outside the local papers in south Devon.

TAM DALYELL

Benjamin Andrew Rogers, merchant seaman; born Newton Ferrers, Devon 5 August 1906; DSC 1944; OBE 1966; Captain, HMS *Loch Fada* 1944-45, SS *Chindwara* 1950-58; SS *Dilwara* 1958-60; SS *Dunera* 1960-66; married 1954 Helen Leonard (died 1991; one stepson); died Newton Ferrers 9 September 1998.



Slightly intimidating

OBITUARIES/7

Ron Huzzard

RON HUZZARD was a pacifist who encapsulated all that is best in the British left and peace movement, adhering to principles of peace, justice and socialism over a lifetime.

In many ways he was unusual for the peace movement: he did not fit the stereotype of sandals and woolly jumpers. His approach was always practical and businesslike. He would clinically explain to numerous meetings the moral case against the use of nuclear weapons and of arms spending, but also the drain on health, education and housing they represent.

Whilst holding strong principles he was very keen on engagement - after the election of Tony Blair as leader of the Labour Party he organised delegations to meet the Shadow Foreign Affairs and Defence teams.

Well aware that those who work in the Defence industry can feel that the peace movement is their enemy, he vigorously supported the concept of arms conversion and sought to engage them in debate. He was a proud recipient of the Frank Cousins Peace Award, while the Imperial War Museum recognised his role by recording his life and views as part of an oral history project.

He was born in Hull in 1920, the son of a foreman printer who was an active trade unionist. He too had a life-long commitment to the trade union movement. He gained his membership of the Mechanical Engineers Institute after studying at night school, and then worked in engineering companies. He joined the Labour Pacifist Fellowship during the Second World War; this later became the Labour Peace Fellowship and in 1980, at the resurgence of the peace movement, Labour Action for Peace (LAP).

Huzzard maintained a zeal for activism in his union, the Draughts

men's Union (Data), later the Union for Manufacturing Science and Finance (MSF), where he argued for peace. A religious man and a Quaker, after his redundancy at the age of 59 he worked full time for five years for the Quaker Commission on Peace.

As a member of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament he brought an incisive mind to branch and National Council meetings.

Meeting Ron Huzzard for the first time was slightly intimidating. He was a smallish man with a direct and clear countenance, well organised and efficient, who got straight to the point and asked pertinent questions that required direct and immediate answers. Various Defence establishment figures found this uncomfortable.

LAP had him as General Secretary from its inception, and the efficiency and single-mindedness of the group were a tribute to him. A keen supporter of the United Nations, Huzzard was in the tradition of his old friends Philip Noel-Baker, Fenner Brockway and Gordon Schaefer in believing in the importance of a world body for peace. He was appalled by the Gulf War in 1990-91 and its consequences. Just before his death he was distressed that a Labour government should order the bombardment of Iraq and felt it was a betrayal of the principles of the Labour Movement.

Huzzard would write or edit a pamphlet every year for LAP on the UN, the arms race and many other topics. These, and the excellently written *LAP Newsletter*, sold well. Whilst not well known to the public, LAP has influence within the Labour Party and holds large fringe meetings at the Party Conference.

Despite living in a Tory/Liberal battleground Huzzard helped to ensure Orpington had a strong Labour Party. Somehow he managed to get elected to Bromley Borough Council for the first time in 1968, the worst ever year for Labour electorally; he served until 1982 and then 1986-90.

Ron Huzzard was an efficient and open man of high moral principle. To him, as he once said, if something was morally wrong it could not be politically right.

JEREMY COREY

Ronald William Huzzard, engineer and peace campaigner; born Hull 29 February 1920; married 1952 Rosalie Raymond (one son, one daughter); died Orpington, Kent 30 December 1998.

GAZETTE

BIRTHDAYS

Miss Shirley Bassey, singer, 62; Mr David Bowie, singer and actor, 52; Mr Stuart Cameron, former chairman, Galaher Ltd, 75; Mr Phil Hall, Editor, *News of the World*, 44; Lord Hardie QC, Lord Advocate, 52; Professor Stephen Hawking, mathematician, 57; Lord Hollenden, former chairman, I & R Morley, 55; Mr Andrew Hunter MP, 56; The Right Rev Edward Knapp-Fisher, Honorary Assistant Bishop, Diocese of Chichester, 84; Professor Sir Robert May, zoologist and ecologist, 62; Air Commodore John Metcalfe, former director of RAF Nursing Services, 76; Mr Ron Moody, actor, 75; Mr Kenneth Purchase MP, 60; Miss Imelda Read, MEP, 60; Professor Brian Reddaway, economic consultant to the World Bank, 86; Professor Charles Tomlinson, Emeritus Professor of English, Bristol University, 72; Sir Geoffrey Whalen, deputy chairman, Peugeot Talbot, 63; Professor Alan Wilson, Vice-Chancellor, Leeds University, 60.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: William Henry Holmes, pianist and composer, 1812; Wilhelm Camphausen, painter, 1818; Alfredo Carlo Piatti, cellist, 1822; Alfred Russel Wallace, 1822.

CHURCH APPOINTMENTS

The following appointments have been announced by the Church of England:

The Rev Dr Crawford Vicar, Blackmore St Lawrence, and St Edmund Macclesfield (Chichester); to be Non-Residentiary Canon, Chelmsford Cathedral (same diocese).

The Rev Dr John Fletcher Vicar, Chadwell Heath St Chad, and Rural Dean of Dartford (Chelmsford); to be also Non-Residentiary Canon, Chelmsford Cathedral (same diocese).

The Rev Dr Charles Goring, with permis-

naturalist, 1823; William Wilkie Collins, novelist, 1824; Hans Guido von Bölow, pianist and conductor, 1830; Frank Nelson Doubleday, publisher and editor, 1862; Viscount Craigavon (James Craig), Ulster statesman, 1871; John Joseph Curtin, Australian prime minister, 1885; Jaromir Weinberg, composer, 1896; Dennis Yates Wheatley, novelist, 1897; Solomon West Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike, Sri Lankan prime minister, 1899; José Ferrer (José Vicente Ferrer Otero y Cintrón), actor, 1912; Elvis Presley, rock singer, 1935.

Deaths: Pope Celestine III, 1198; Ambrogio Giotti di Bondone, painter, 1337; Alfonso V, King of Aragon, 1458; Sir John Dalrymple, first Earl of Stair, politician and lawyer, 1707; Arcangelo Corelli, composer and violinist, 1713; John Baskerville, printer and typographer, 1775; Jean-Marie Collot d'Herbois, French revolutionary, 1795; Eli Whitney, inventor and perfecter of the cotton gin, 1825; Moritz von Schwind, painter, 1871; Paul Verlaine, poet, 1896; Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell, first Baron Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, 1941; Richard Tauber (Ernst Seiffert (Denem)), tenor, 1948; Kurt Schwitters, painter and writer, 1948; Chou En-lai, Chinese leader, 1976; André-François Poncet,

politician, 1978; Georgi Maksimiliani Malenkov, former Soviet leader, 1988; Sir Michael Kemp Tippett, composer and conductor, 1998.

On this day: Alexander I

accessed to the Scottish

throne, 1106; the explorer Robert La Salle reached Niagara Falls, 1679; soup kitchens for the poor were opened in London, 1800; Britain occupied the Cape of Good Hope, 1806; the Americans defeated the British at the Battle of New Orleans, 1815; the Severn Railway Tunnel was opened, 1866; the British evacuated Gallipoli, 1916; President Woodrow Wilson announced his "Fourteen Points" for world peace, 1918; Chequers Court was occupied by its first prime minister tenant, David Lloyd-George, 1921; Ibn Saud was proclaimed King of the Hejaz, a name which he changed to Saudi Arabia, 1926; sugar, bacon and butter were rationed in Britain, 1940; General Charles de Gaulle, President of the French Fifth Republic, 1958; in New York, seven floors of the Empire State Building caught fire, 1963; Uruguay, the British ambassador, Geoffrey Jackson, was kidnapped by guerrillas, 1971; the first London production of the musical show *Company* took place, 1972; the oil tanker *Exodus* exploded in Bantry Bay, Ireland, with the loss of 49 lives, 1979; Pan American World Airways filed for bankruptcy in the United States, 1991.

LECTURES

Today is the Feast Day of St Adrian of Canterbury, St Apollinaris the Apologist, St Erhard, St Gudula, St Lucian of Beauvais, St Pega, St Severinus of Noricum Repense, St Severinus of Septempseda, St Thorfinn and St Wulain.

ROYAL VICTORIAN ORDER

A Service of the Royal Victorian Order will be held in St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, at 11am on Thursday 29 April 1999, followed by a reception in the State Apartments of Windsor Castle for all members and medalists of the order attending the service.

Due to the limited seating

capacity of St George's Chapel, tickets for the service and reception will be restricted to members of the Royal Victorian Order and holders of the Royal Victorian Medal only. Please do not apply for tickets for spouses, or other guests. Honorary members and medalists are not eligible to attend.

Members of the order and

medalists who wish to attend should apply for a ticket as soon as possible, and not later than Friday 12 March 1999, clearly stating their name, address and grade within the order. They should also state if they require a parking permit. Application should be made to the Registrar of the Royal Victorian Order, The Central Chancery of the Orders of Knighthood, St James's Palace, London SW1A 1BH.

SYNAGOGUE SERVICES

Details of synagogue services to be held tomorrow may be obtained by telephoning the following. Sabbath begins in London at 1830pm.

United Synagogues: 0181-343 8888.

Edinburgh Synagogue: 0131-202 2263.

Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues: 0171-521 1663.

Reform Synagogues of Great Britain: 0181-345 4731.

Spanish and Portuguese Jews Congregation: 0171-288 2575.

New London Synagogue (Masorti): 0171-328 1026.

APPOINTMENTS

Mr Peter Smith, to be Governor of the Cayman Islands. Mr Roland Smith, to be ambassador to Ukraine.

Exploring the Western Desert in Egypt. He also illegally entered the then Italian Colony of Cyrenaica, where he met Count Ladislaus de Almasy, the real "English Patient". During the desert war, the LRDG penetrated thousands of miles behind enemy lines, and, as well as raiding, garnered priceless information. Later, still calling themselves the LRDG, they operated in Yugoslavia, Albania, and the Aegean and Italy.

Field Marshal Slim's condemnation of special forces was probably made with Wingate in mind.

Others were far more hostile. They (Special Forces) contributed nothing to Allied victory, all they did was to offer a too easy, because romanticised, form of gallantry to a few antisocial irresponsible individuals, who sought a more personal satisfaction from the war than of standing their chance, being bayoneted in a slit trench or burnt alive in a tank.

Of the myriad special force units, perhaps the most cost-effective was the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG), brainchild of Major Bagnold, who with a group of like-minded officers spent time pre-war ex-

tence. But, to his surprise, there were banner headlines in the British press about his exploits. He recovered his aplomb and his skill at "creative" writing, and crafted a report which, as well as showing his exploits in the best possible light, called for a repeat performance on a vastly greater scale. Again few of those who survived were fit for further active duty, and the returns were questionable, set against the effort involved.

It would be insulting the thousands who volunteered, or were recruited, for "hazardous service" in the multifarious special units - Chindits, LRDG, SAS, SBS, Jedburghs, V Force, Poppy's Private Army, to name but some - to suggest that they were seeking the easy way out. Most were very young, and brimming with energy: the majority civilians who had joined, or been conscripted, to fight in the war. From the wealth of talent, skills, intellect and entrepreneurial spirit in the armed forces of the nation in arms, some remarkable units were formed; of whom some achieved spectacular results.

Julian Thompson is the author of *War Behind Enemy Lines* (Pan, £10).

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE
galoot, n.

This goes back to 1812, to mean a soldier, or by mid-century awkward soldier.

Meanwhile, in America, it

had

They know that darts is daft

The board is so small even the live audience have to watch it on television. So why do they enjoy it so much? Is it just the drink?

Championship darts, the press officer explained, has to be set in a pub atmosphere. And the Circus Tavern in Purfleet, host of the world finals, tried its best to meet this requirement. But to fulfil it properly there should have been a toilet door just beside the board, which swings open at 20-second intervals, revealing a bloke doing his fives up, saying "Sorry lads", and walking in front of the players as they were about to throw.

The board would be at a slight angle, with the No 5 section so full of holes that the darts could no longer stay in. As Eric Bristow prepared to throw, there'd be half a dozen lads behind him talking about the steering circle on the new Sierra, and every game would peter out into a 45-minute struggle for a double-one, before someone said, "Sod it, nearest the bull wins."

The Tavern does have trays carrying six or more pints of lager. And it is swimming with the out-of-town working class: men in football tops or perfectly ironed silk shirts, and teenage girls in short white skirts with their arms around 35-year-old blokes who run their old man's panel-beating business.

But then the presentation goes to the other extreme. The MC delivers a manic, boxing-style introduction: "And noooooo - currently ranked world number two, current holder of the Eastbourne Rowntrees Fruit Pastilles Knockout Challenge - the one and oooooonly - Alan - the ICE MAN - WARRINERRRRRRRR!!!"

At which point the sound system blares out an anthem such as "Start It Up" at glass-rattling volume, and dry ice is sprayed furiously along a corridor, from which emerges a circle of huge, bald bodyguards in black bow ties, and you wonder whether Freddie Mercury's about to descend, singing "I Want to Ride My Bicycle". Instead, a paunchy, bemused darts player strolls into view, occasionally calling out "All right Terry", when a mate in the audience slaps him on the back.

This is a lad schizophrenic. Is darts sticking to its down-to-earth pub image, or moving in the direction of glam rock, pure theatre in the mould of Seventies TV wrestling? For the latter, it would need masked

MARK STEEL

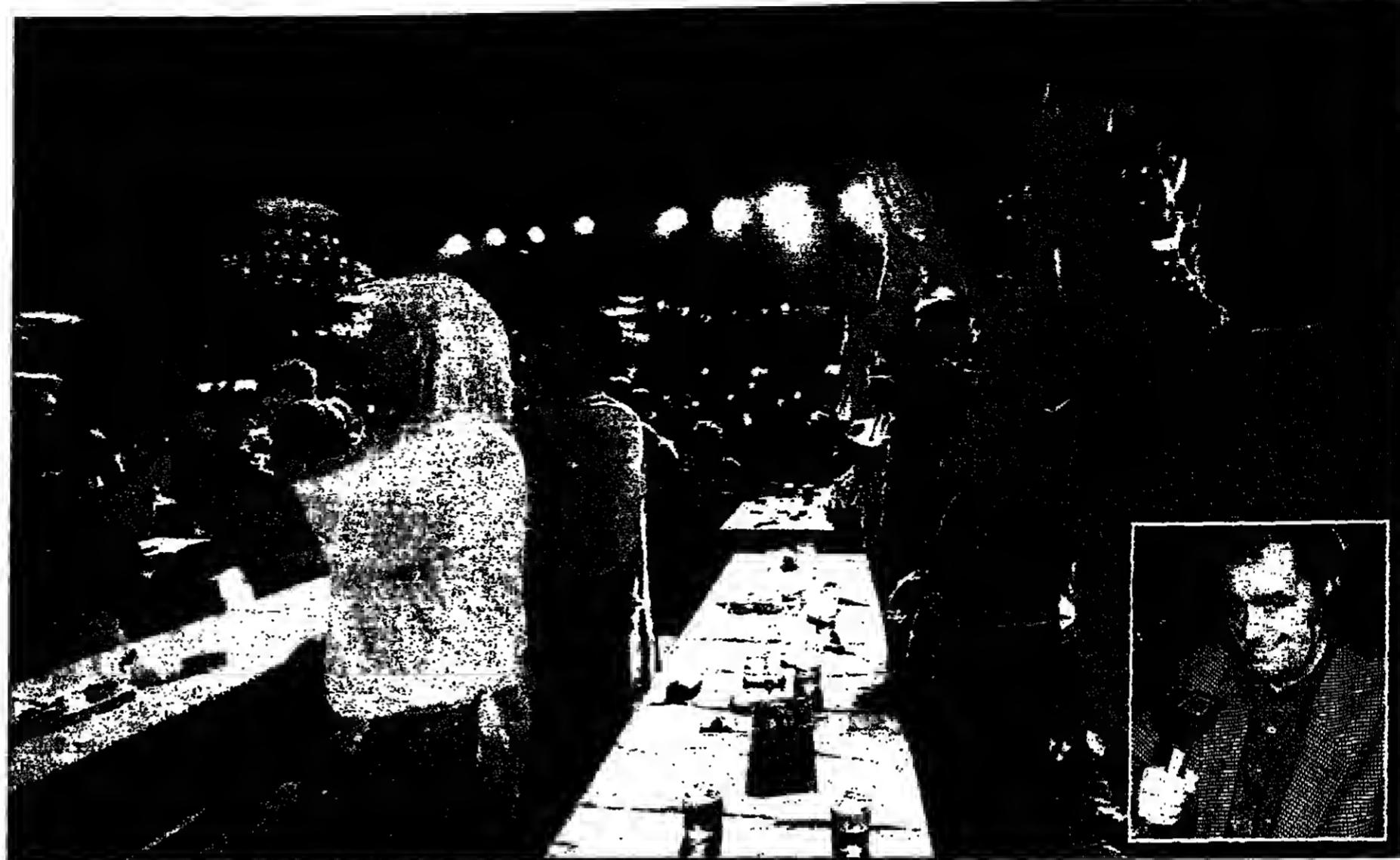


ON LOCATION

players, camp blond players, and baddies who jab their opponents with a dart which everyone can see except the referee, provoking old women to climb on stage and whack the baddy with the dry ice machine. This would have the advantage of giving the live audience something to see. Because the segments of a dartboard are so small that no one watching it could have the foggiest idea who's scored what. So the entire audience watches TV screens dotted around the room, there being no point in watching the live play itself. It's as if football stands were decked out with television sets showing *Match of the Day*, because the game was played with a marble and six-inch-wide goals.

The other problem is what to discuss between throws. Tactics? There aren't any. If a player's losing, he just has to get the dart in the right square more often than he has until now. And there are no controversial refereeing decisions to debate. A late tackle would be fairly easy to spot, and you wouldn't get far insisting to the ref that one of Phil Taylor's twenties was really a seven.

Nor does a dartboard ever take spin or need a shot from a sharp angle, or get wet and favour players who prefer soft going. When it's raining, players don't need darts with extra tread. And you can't seek advice from a caddie on which dart to use for a particular shot. Because darts is exactly the same thing over and over and over again. The opening anthem for every player should be "Nothing Ever Changes" by The Specials. It's the evening equivalent of chucking crumpled balls of paper into a basket from a swivel chair, although give it a couple of years and that'll be on *Sky Sports* 1 as well.



The crowd at Circus Tavern: are they capable of watching anything in a group without singing about it? Inset: Sid Waddell

Russell Sach

You sense that most of the audience knows, deep down, that watching darts is daft. Which is why they worship the commentator Sid Waddell. He provides the one spark of unpredictability, capable of conjuring a metaphor involving Socrates, King Lear and Elvis over a missed double 12. So whenever he emerges from his commentary box, fans flock for autographs with twice the vigour they would show for the players.

The live darts audience is there for atmosphere. You can carry on drinking throughout the game, and need watch only from time to time.

And football songs are converted into darts songs: "Walking in a Warmer Wonderland", "There's Only One Eric Bristow", etc. Though someone should try a version of "one-nil, one-nil", that goes "167-311, 167-311".

It makes you wonder whether they're capable of watching anything in a group without singing about it. At odd moments, however, the mood changes. The best of these came during the first semi-final, with Peter Manley needing one double for the match, while Shayne Burgess needed 161. Anxious and twitchy,

Burgess landed treble 19, treble 18, bull, to stay in the contest. This was the drama we all wanted. Burgess held his arms aloft, looking as astonished as he was delighted, and the place erupted. For a moment, there was great entertainment, because of the human interest. We were watching the unbridled glee of a man who'd resigned himself to defeat, before discovering an improbable escape.

Like snooker in the Eighties, darts is at its most meaningful when the characters provide a soap-opera background. Which gave me an ad-

vantage. Because I happened to know that in his hotel Burgess had a licensed airgun, which he was using to shoot some of Essex's glut of rabbits, and having them for dinner as he didn't like the hotel food.

More generally, the charm of darts players is that they're more approachable than other sportsmen. They have been guts and proper wives, not Spice Girls. The fans can appreciate them as "one of us".

But there was one other striking aspect of the Circus Tavern audience: it was dazzlingly exclusively white. Which isn't to say there was

any evidence of racism, but none the less it's hard to imagine any other gathering of such numbers which would include not a single black or Asian. Darts, it seems, is stuck in its image as the preserve of white, out-of-town, working-class culture.

So when the amenable Phil Taylor won his seventh title, who's to say whether his prize money came in the form of a cheque, or whether he was taken out the back and given it in fifties by a bloke in a sheepskin jacket, saying, "There you are son, now get down Romford Market and get yourself summink nice".

How I built the boat of my dreams

The best boat design should combine old and new, says Tom Cunliffe.

And he put it into practice in his own craft, *The Westerman*

THIS WEEK, Earls Court is resplendent with fine yachts, bristling with new technology. Nearly all are descendants of the hull-shape revolution of 25 years ago. By contrast, my own boat, *The Westerman*, lies quietly on a tidal creek in the New Forest. She was designed last year but, seeing her, you might imagine her to be 100 years old and that her owner must be some kind of lost-soul romantic. Perhaps I am, though I doubt it, for this boat combines all the magic of old-fashioned boat design with the advances of modern know-how.

Sophisticated technology often insulates crews from the harsh realities of maritime life - often the very realities that forced to rediscover by going to sea in the first place.

It's not that I'm suggesting sailors should wear hair shirts. It's always been important to me that my boats have a coal stove for warmth and dryness, cosy berths and a highly effective galley. But why go cruising at all if every sail sets and furls itself? The occasional battle with kicking canvas is part of the seaman's life. And for what purpose should we abandon common sense and move our steering positions from the security of the aft end to some vulnerable perch half-way to the bow? The answer is that this creates a cabin like that of an ocean liner, with space for a bed larger than the one at home.

For me a boat should always be a boat, and not a cottage on

water.

When I took delivery of

Hilda, the Edwardian pilot cutter in which John McCarthy and I circumnavigated Britain for BBC1's Island Race series, the previous owner observed that "she has every comfort, but

no luxury". Hilda taught me why wise he was. Her sails were heavy, and she had no pumped water, no electricity to speak of, no fridge, no central heating, no winches and absolutely no electronics, especially in the navigation department, yet she was the kindest, easiest boat that I have ever sailed at sea.

Sadly, the very antiquity of classic boats and yachts means that they need a lot of looking after. When I damaged my back I had to face the fact that my 15-year love-affair had to end. Searching for a younger replacement in the brokers' advertisements produced no credible contenders, so I decided to build a new boat from scratch, and commissioned the designer Nigel Irens to work on something for me.

Irens is famous for his racing multi-hulls and for developing fast, economical power boats such as the record globe-

girdles *Cable and Wireless*. At the same time, having lived aboard an ancient wooden beauty in the early Seventies he understands about easily driven hulls, and knows more of the way of a boat on the sea than anyone I can think of.

His work on *The Westerman*

has not disappointed me.

Although Irens and Ed Burnett,

his right-hand man, are adept with the CAD (computer-assisted design) program, Irens initially drew this boat on a paper napkin, and only later transferred his ideas to the computer. After the machine had worked up a set of lines he carved a model, just as boatyards did in the days of sail.

Together we considered the

primary embryonic vessel,

then the lines back into the

electronic box for modification.

The next model was nearly right

and by the time the final version ap-

peared, the form was perfect.

The completed boat has now crossed the North Atlantic and has won four out of her first six racing starts. Her appearance is timeless, her motion at sea is a pleasure and her accommodation, much of it in re-claimed pitch pine, emanates an atmosphere of deep peace.

Maybe this is because she was drawn purely as a sailing craft, without reference to any furniture we might put into her. That is the well tried method of the sea. It still works.

The Westerman is constructed in wood epoxy, timber treated with penetrating glue, and she is totally impervious to water. Thus she has all the benefits of a glass fibre boat yet looks like, smells like, feels like and sails like the real thing.

She is living proof that there

is no need to follow current

fashions to find satisfaction,

and that sometimes it pays to

listen to the lessons of history.

Tom Cunliffe

Russell Sach



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Scientists are on the attack against influenza's ability to mutate into lethal new varieties. By Steve Connor and Pete Davies

A sniff of a cure for flu

For those of us who have struggled through the new year with a hacking cough, aching sinuses and a runny nose, it is small comfort to learn that - officially at least - Britain is not in the midst of a flu epidemic. Doctors need to report about twice as many cases as they have in recent weeks for an epidemic to be declared. This lack of official recognition, however, has not stopped the spread of one of the most potent viruses in the catalogue of human disease.

Influenza, named in 14th-century Florence when an unusual conjunction of planets was thought to "influence" an outbreak of coughs and fever, has dogged humankind for generations. It caused the single biggest pandemic this century when a particularly virulent strain killed between 20 million and 40 million people in the winter of 1918-19. Even in non-epidemic years, flu routinely kills thousands of Britons, mostly the very old and infirm.

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Although flu is a common infection, it has proved uncommonly difficult for scientists to tackle. The virus has an in-built variation mechanism to ensure that, with every successive replication, many different kinds of viral progeny are spawned.

This chameleon-like ability to change its appearance accounts for the way it bobs and weaves its way past our immune defences. Flu seems to have evolved a foolproof way of moving efficiently through a population to ensure that there are plenty of viruses floating in the vicinity of a chance cough, a sudden sneeze or an inadvertent yawn.

Hope is on the way, however, in the form of two new drugs being tested. Both attack a part of the virus which scientists believe will prove to be its Achilles heel.

The viral protein in question is called neuraminidase, and plays a vital role in the life cycle of the flu agent by cutting the "umbilical cord" that keeps the newborn virus from attacking uninfected cells.

What makes neuraminidase such an attractive target for drug designers is that the protein contains a region that seems to be common to all flu viruses. This "conserved site" is crucial for carrying out the protein's job of cleaving the virus as it emerges from the membrane of the human cell where it was created. The rationale is that if a drug can be made to block this site, the virus can be prevented from freeing itself, so stopping the infection of further cells. And as all flu viruses possess the same conserved site on their neuraminidase protein, it should work against all strains of virus.

Graeme Laver, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology at the Australian National University in Canberra, was the first scientist to grow crystals of neuraminidase, which led to the discovery of the 3-D structure of the protein's conserved site by Peter Colman of the Commonwealth Scientific Research Organisation, in Australia. Since then, drug companies have been racing to find drugs that can slot into the conserved site of neuraminidase, as a key fits a lock.

Two such contenders have emerged, although neither is yet licensed. One, called zanamivir and backed by Glaxo-Wellcome, began its first human trials in 1994 and is applied via an inhaler. The other, dubbed GS 4071 and developed by Gilead, a Californian company, with backing from Roche, is given in tablet form.

Both neuraminidase inhibitors, however, will work only if they are given in the earliest stages of infection, often long before people realise they have flu. Scientists believe that this means the drugs will offer practical help only if a simple test can be devised for people to see whether they are in the first stages of disease - before obvious symptoms have appeared.

Treating flu with drugs, therefore, is still some years away, which means that the main defence against a deadly new pandemic is constant surveillance for the emergence of new strains and the development of specific vaccines to combat their spread. It is, of course, the variability of the influenza virus that has made it so difficult to develop a vaccine that can work against all versions of the disease.

There are three main types of flu virus - A, B and C. Within the A type,



Children of families stricken by flu fed by volunteers in Cincinnati, US. Between 20 and 40 million people died from the virus in 1918-19

Corbis-Bettmann

gence of new strains and the development of specific vaccines to combat their spread. It is, of course, the variability of the influenza virus that has made it so difficult to develop a vaccine that can work against all versions of the disease.

There are three main types of flu virus - A, B and C. Within the A type,

neuraminidases. Combinations of these two proteins are used to classify A-type flu viruses, along the lines of sub-type H1N1, H1N2 or H2N2, and so on. Scientists believe it was the H1N1 sub-type that caused the 1918-19 pandemic. The 1957 Asian flu outbreak which killed 1 million people was caused by H2N2, and

Is it possible that the most deadly pandemics are caused by changes to the haemagglutinin protein? Attempts to extract flu virus from the corpses of 1918 victims preserved in the permafrost of Alaska and the Norwegian island of Spitsbergen have so far failed to resolve this problem. "What we don't yet know is what

sex. Type A virus, which also infects wild birds, domestic fowl and pigs, is a skillful exponent of the phenomenon, which accounts for its pandemic potential.

When strains of type A flu from different species come together in one individual, the conditions are perfect for a shift to take place. Pigs are thought to be the most likely mixing vessels for different flu viruses, allowing the free exchange of genetic material. The result is a new strain of flu that can then cause havoc in the human population by being so unusual. Virologists believe that China is the place most likely

place for this to occur because of the large numbers of people, pigs and ducks living in close proximity. This could account for so many epidemics starting in the East.

Even if this did not happen with the Hong Kong chicken virus, there will be plenty of opportunities in the future for it to occur with another flu virus, Dr Hay says. "What we know is that a pandemic will happen. What we don't know is when."

Pete Davies's book, *'Catching Cold'*, is to be published by Michael Joseph in August.

Even in non-epidemic years, flu routinely kills thousands of Britons, mostly the very old and infirm

which can infect both human beings and other animals and has been responsible for the most deadly epidemics, virologists have identified a number of sub-types based on versions of the two key proteins found on the virus's surface, neuraminidase and haemagglutinin, which serves the function of locking on to the cell membrane prior to the virus infecting its host cell.

So far scientists have identified 15 haemagglutinin sub-types and nine

sub-type H3N2 killed 700,000 in the 1968 pandemic of Hong Kong flu.

Flu experts believe that the worst pandemics are caused when new forms of the virus emerge, and able to overwhelm the body's immune defences. It is also possible that some flu viruses are more lethal than others because their haemagglutinin protein somehow enables them to infect a wider range of tissues, rather than just the cells lining the respiratory tract.

determines the virulence of the virus," says Alan Hay, director of the World Health Organisation's World Influenza Centre at the National Institute of Medical Research, at Mill Hill in north London, where the flu virus was first isolated in 1933.

Although viruses can "drift" from one replication to another, they can occasionally experience a more radical "shift" which involves the shuffling or recombination of genetic material during the viral version of

retina. Pigs are not the only suspect animals. A year ago a new strain of flu emerged in the chicken population of Hong Kong. More than 1.5 chickens were slaughtered, but not for the virus had jumped the species barrier to infect 18 people, six of whom died. Fortunately, al-

though the virus was deadly, it did not seem to possess the ability to move easily from one person to another. If it had done, it would almost certainly have developed into the next pandemic.

Surveillance has been intense since last year to try to find out whether this Hong Kong virus has managed to escape into the human population, or to infect other animals. "There is no evidence that it's out there in the population. It seems that the majority of those who were infected had direct contact with chickens," says Dr Hay. "But there is concern about a recombination with another virus to make it more easily transmissible."

Even if this did not happen with the Hong Kong chicken virus, there will be plenty of opportunities in the future for it to occur with another flu virus, Dr Hay says. "What we know is that a pandemic will happen. What we don't know is when."

Q: What is the smallest spider in the world?
The smallest spider is the Mygalomorph spider from Borneo, whose body measures just 0.5mm long - the size of a coffee granule. The largest is the goliath bird-eating spider, the largest of which has a leg span of 29cm (11in) - the length of your forearm.

Q: How long do spiders live?
Ordinary spiders live for about a year, although up to five to six months of this may be spent in the egg stage. However, some South American tarantulas can

live for as long as 20 years, while some tropical jumping spiders only live for three months.

Q: How is snake venom produced?
Venom is produced at the back of the snake's head (behind the eyes). Glands similar to those that produce our saliva make and store a cocktail of venoms, toxins and enzymes, which travel through ducts to either fangs or grooves in the teeth. The venoms work in different ways: they can paralyse prey (cobra venom affects the nervous system) or digest tissues and organs (ratite

snakes) which helps them in their food intake.

Q: Is there such a thing as a bionic eye?

People may be either blind from birth or have lost their sight through disease or an accident. For those born blind, an artificial eye may not be all that useful as their visual cortex has not been trained to see. For those that have lost their vision later on in life, a bionic eye (an implant that

replaces damaged retinal cells) may restore some of their sight.

Q: Is there such a thing as a bionic eye?
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human volunteer who had gone blind through glaucoma. The patient could see a light shone in the eye, and make out simple letters. If more electrodes are used, the wearer's vision might be even better. Next, the

researchers will need to make an implant that does not corrode in the salty solutions of the eye, and will not slice into the retina (the implants are razor sharp as they are so thin). Researchers remain hopeful that eventually such

implants may restore sight to some blind people.

Q: Why do your eyebrows grow as you get older?

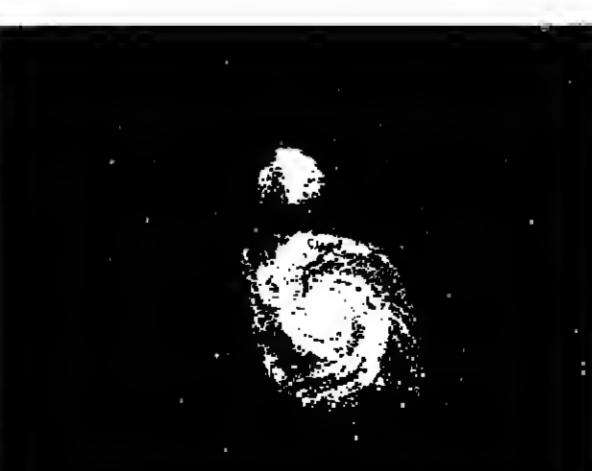
The continued growth of hair in men is thought to be due to the male sex hormones (androgens). Hair in different parts of the body varies in its sensitivity to androgens and eyebrows, nose, ear and patches on the top of the shoulder respond to continual high levels of the hormones. It therefore does not usually appear in women, who have much lower levels of androgens. Why evolution should have

produced them is unclear. There is, however, a hint from some species that females seek out males who are older because that shows they are good at surviving and so must have a fit set of genes. The males of these species develop outward signs of their age. Perhaps going grey and sprouting ear and nose hairs was once attractive to women and so men showing them were successful at getting their genes into the next generation.

You can also visit the [technique World Wide Web site](http://www.science.net) at <http://www.science.net.org.uk>

THE TRUTH ABOUT...

DARK GALAXIES



Whirlpool galaxies seen from Earth, but how much of the universe remains invisible? Science Photo Library

YOU'VE PROBABLY heard about the "dark matter problem" - the frustrating fact that astronomers simply can't account for nine-tenths of the universe. A small fraction of every galaxy is made of stars, gas clouds and "ordinary" matter. But the rest of the cosmos - in fact, most of it - is made of something dark and mysterious.

Now astronomers have discovered that small, nearly invisible galaxies may, in fact, be heavyweights, with far more than their expected share of dark matter. And, since these dwarf galaxies are so common, they could make up a substantial fraction of the total mass of the universe.

"Although these [dwarf] galaxies contain almost no stars, their density of dark matter is very high," said John Kormendy of the University of Hawaii. Kormendy, who worked with Kenneth Freeman of Australia's Mount Stromlo Observatory, gave a presentation this week at the winter meeting of the American Astronomical Society in Austin, Texas.

Kormendy and Freeman studied 45 galaxies, ranging from the brightest to the just barely visible. They described

the faintest galaxies as "gossamer" in appearance - because they produce so little light, they hardly show up even in time-exposure photographs of deep space, taken with the largest telescopes. But their high content of dark matter means these tiny galaxies could actually outweigh their brighter siblings.

"It wouldn't take many undiscovered galaxies to make them add up to an important

- or perhaps "brown dwarf" stars that are bigger than the planet Jupiter but too small to ignite a nuclear reaction in their cores. Various other candidates have also been put forward, including neutrinos and black holes.

These dwarf galaxies are also believed to be extremely old. As relics of the early universe, they may help astronomers to shed light on the process of galaxy formation.

Vera Rubin, a pioneer in the study of dark matter at the Carnegie Institute in Washington, says that these small galaxies - rich in dark matter, but giving off almost no light - may be extremely common.

"What we've learned in the last half-century is that nature tends to do anything that is not forbidden," she remarked. But it still may be decades before the problem of dark matter is unravelled, she said.

Rubin compared the astronomers' challenge to that of putting together a completely black jigsaw puzzle in a completely dark room. "We don't know where all the pieces are, and when we do find a piece, we're not absolutely sure where it fits."

DAN FALK

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Dated the 29th day of December 1998

By Order of the Board

John Marshall, Director

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In the matter of

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21st December 1998

Date 31st January 1999

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Dated the 31st day of December 1998

By Order of the Board

W. A. Pickering, Director

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The Insolvency Act 1986 B1. WATERS

Glasgow hopes that becoming the City of Architecture and Design will bring it world status. By Nonie Niesewand

A new sphere of influence

Winds gusting up to 90mph in the new year topped a 200-year-old stone church steeple in the centre of Glasgow, along with road signs, scaffolding and trees. Gale-torn Glasgow, its skyline punctuated by cranes, cordoned off by the council for an ambitious £25m programme to pedestrianise the centre, is not looking its best as it prepares to launch itself as the UK's first - and last - city of architecture and design. But from 8pm tomorrow Glaswegians will see their city in a new light, as 999 coloured lights around the city illuminate its historic buildings. Down at the Armadillo - as Norman Foster's convention centre is known by the locals - the launch party begins as Glasgow 1999 unveils a year-round programme of arts and architecture. It aims to take the design of buildings and products off their pedestals and popularise them. Like Cinderella, Glasgow is shaking off its downtrodden image and becoming glamorous. Take the

Glasgow 1999 aims to take the design of buildings and products off their pedestals and popularise them

pumpkins inside the MacLellan Galleries at an exhibition called *Winning: the Design of Sports*. These spheres with their gaping grins and peepholes are by Ron Arad, professor of industrial design and furniture at the Royal College of Art, and replace old-fashioned showcases. "They're his way of saying 'halls' to the whole idea of conventional display," says Geoff Crowther, his project director.

The balls, moulded in glass fibre, are also a witty way of showing off sports memorabilia and cutting-edge technology in sports equipment collected by the curator Sue Andrew, who says "sports is the new rock'n'roll, even if you don't play any."

Tennis has come a long way from Fred Perry's little plimsolls and gutt-strung wooden tennis rackets, to titanium tennis rackets, but are banned from competitive matches but are used by tennis players to bat balls across city blocks between the fire escape stairs - as shown on MTV. Early sleds like planks of wood evolve into carbon-fibre blades; clumsy golf irons mutate into Big Bertha titanium clubs.

Protective clothing in one of the galleries, which makes even displace riders look like Darth Vader from *Star Wars*, may appear a bit nanny-ish until you remember that the two survivors of the avalanche on Anach Mor in Scotland which killed four, were saved by the gear they wore. Chris Bonington helped to select the climbing gear in a room entitled "You're on Your Own", which features an extraordinary one-person collapsible ledge that hangs over a cliff face as a sleeping platform, dispensing with the need to pitch a tent on a craggy slope.

Formula One racers screech to a halt inside the galleries, including the racy red Maserati in which Jackie Stewart won his last Grand Prix, alongside the amazing racing bike made by Graeme Obree from washing-machine parts, and a racing bike with wing-like handlebars that looks like a design by Ronald Seare for a flying machine.

An exhibition of footwear shows

Bobby Charlton's "Brasilia" football boots, as well as Ronaldo's own design for Nike and the gold boots with which Michael Johnson triumphed at the Atlanta Olympics in 1996.

A few myths are dispelled. Cricketers who insist that the white ball is harder than the red are wrong - they are exactly the same hardness, but the white ball will be used for 1999 World Cup because it can be picked up more easily by TV cameras. Sport is big business, as this exhibition reminds us. Whether you play lacrosse, croquet, baseball, shiny (Scots hockey), or snowboard, or take the Cresta run on the equivalent of a carbon-fibre tray, you will find something interesting to discover.

Even couch potatoes will be en-

tertained by sporting ads beamed up in the darkened rooms. Ron Arad put black bin-liners over the gallery skylights to keep the place mysteriously dimmed, with just a spotlight on each of the 18 spheres to illuminate their contents.

Winning: the design of sports is

a great title to kick off the year-long celebrations. "Winning" reminds us that Glasgow beat the short-listed favourites, Liverpool and Edinburgh, in a gladiatorial contest three years ago when things looked a lot more optimistic for architecture, with the Arts Council funding

by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, called the Lighthouse, which opens in June with an exhibition on Glasgow's finest architect, Alexander Thomson. This centre is precisely what the Department of Culture, Media and Sport keeps talking about setting up in the regions, so far with spectacular lack of initiative. And 100 houses designed by architects and built by property developers will open on site this summer, as part of a brown-field housing programme for 250 homes in the inner city. Sudjic points out that this beats bollow the Millennium Village outside the Dome at Greenwich peninsula, which disappointingly offers only 80 homes due to open by 2000.

Glasgow was given £45m for this year-long event to make the public more aware of the design of buildings and products. Dejan Sudjic hopes 600,000 visitors will go through the doors of Glasgow 1999, which detractors say is too optimistic, given that the Design Museum in London struggles to get 150,000 annually. However, the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley Tourist Boards, which

Sport is big business, as this exhibition reminds us - whether you play lacrosse, croquet, baseball or shiny (Scots hockey)

are used to the realities of visitor attendance (about 2 million visitors a year, 1.7 million from the UK) think it is realistic. They are banking on annual tourist spending of £850m in the city, increasing by £20m a year.

"Glasgow 1999 widens the international appeal" says Nancy McLardie, head of PR for the Greater Glasgow tourist board, which has spent the past two years pitching for business in the US, Scandinavia and continental Europe and has been rewarded by 20 architectural and design conventions booking space in Glasgow; more are expected once the Lighthouse design centre opens in June. Convention bookings earned Glasgow about £89m last year.

After the gales, it looks as though Glasgow's winds of fortune are set to change, with the most imaginative programme ever planned around architecture and design.

For tourist board information call the Glasgow Information Centre on 0141-204 4400, or e-mail tourism_glasgow@ggcvib.org.uk

Colin McPherson

art and architecture programmes.

But now they have lost the architecture brief to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, whose minister, Chris Smith, should head for Glasgow. There are lessons to be learnt from the city's single-minded pursuit of world status as city of

architecture and design.

The director of Glasgow 1999, Dejan Sudjic, has attracted an international team of stars to perform over the coming year, but already people are asking, "what's its legacy?" Sudjic points to the restoration of the old Glasgow Herald building

and London's Rick Mather and Ian Ritchie.

Half a dozen public spaces are the product of a collaboration between architects, designers, artists and the community. A fund has been established to allow grassroots initiatives to be realised, everything from exhibitions of silk banners to flood-lighting water towers. The Glasgow Collection of design prototypes encourages Glasgow-based manufacturers to use design to expand their product ranges, and Glasgow designers to use the purchasing power of city institutions. A new museum of design, the Lighthouse, will open this summer in what was Charles Rennie Mackintosh's first public building, the offices of the Glasgow Herald.

What makes the project so exciting is the opportunity that working with an entire city brings to deploy the widest possible range of talents. We at Glasgow 1999 have realised a project that will have longevity in its impact. What do I hope people will say at the end of the year-long event? Simply, "It worked."



Cutting-edge sports equipment as art Colin McPherson

Why I'm glad to be in Glasgow

The event's director, Dejan Sudjic, says he has the best design job in Britain

DESIGN FIGURES on the political agenda for both economic and cultural issues, precisely which depends on the national context.

In Anglo-Saxon countries governments can be persuaded to invest in design because of what they can be persuaded to see as its economic benefits. Even Mrs Thatcher was bitten by the design bug, seeing it as a way to head off Japanese imports.

Now Tony Blair is busy redesigning Britain, again for what are presented as sound economic reasons, but which in fact involve much more complex motivation. The controversial - and expensive - dome in Greenwich is intended to reflect well on Blairism, but it is more likely to be the other way around. A successful Blair will mean a successful dome.

At my interview to become director of Glasgow UK City of Architecture and Design 1999 three years ago, I said that it was the best job that anybody passionate about architecture and design could possibly have hoped for, since at least the Festival of Britain. Nothing that

has since happened has proved me wrong.

Glasgow, as UK city of architecture and design, tries to deal with both aspects of design at the same time. It is about economics and it is about culture. A year of events and exhibitions explores the way in which design and architecture can engage with everyday life, from sport to food. Why did Glasgow want to do this?

Primarily to reshape the world's impression of it. One of the first cities to experience the booming growth of the industrial revolution, it was also among the first to have to explore the realities of a post-industrial future. In 1900 Glasgow built almost half of the world's ships. It was at the cutting edge of technological innovation as well as architecture and design.

The ambitions for the year are complex, as are its origins. As chairman of the Arts Council, Peter Palumbo pronounced that every year of the Nineties, one British city would stage a year-long festival dedicated to a particular area of the arts. The

brief was to make the subject more accessible to a wider audience. Some have been more successful than others. The year of opera, 1998, staged not in the city but in the county of Suffolk, was somewhat handicapped by the fact that there is no opera house in Suffolk. Tyneside did better two years ago as Year of Visual Arts, with Anthony Gormley's *Angel of the North*.

Architecture and design is the last in the series. Perhaps surprisingly, it has attracted the most interest, with 25 cities competing. The Arts Council contribution in each case is a modest £400,000. The rest of the money, if any, is the responsibility of the host city. In Glasgow's case the total budget is £45m, of which £8m came from Glasgow City Council and the Glasgow Development Agency. The rest has been found from European money, lottery funding, private sector sponsorship and commercial investment.

The year involves constructing a demonstration housing area on Glasgow Green, the old heart of the city, which will be the catalyst

for redeveloping the area. Glasgow Green is where the city started. The wealthy built mansions here in the 18th century and swiftly abandoned them. The plan allows for the construction of a genuine slice of city, not a suburb in the city centre, and will look at how you build in the city and how the general standard of new housing can be transformed. It is a pointer for the research the government is currently engaged upon, aimed at accommodating the millions of new homes Britain needs on brown-field sites rather than the green belt.

We didn't have the money to build the houses, so we advertised for developers who would be ready to work with the architects we nominated. The homes are now up to seventh-floor level and, when they went on sale at between £55,000 and £135,000, people spent the night queuing for them.

By the summer of 1999 more than 100 apartments will have been completed, involving Scottish architects as well as Ushida Findlay's Tokyo practice

and London's Rick Mather and Ian Ritchie.

Half a dozen public spaces are the product of a collaboration between architects, designers, artists and the community. A fund has been established to allow grassroots initiatives to be realised, everything from exhibitions of silk banners to flood-lighting water towers. The Glasgow Collection of design prototypes encourages Glasgow-based manufacturers to use design to expand their product ranges, and Glasgow designers to use the purchasing power of city institutions. A new museum of design, the Lighthouse, will open this summer in what was Charles Rennie Mackintosh's first public building, the offices of the Glasgow Herald.

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IT'S A genius
PILE OF

Glasgow 1999 UK City of Architecture and Design. Arguably the best thing that's ever happened in Glasgow.

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I was a teenage usher

You never know. The person checking your ticket for a West End show might just be the new Simon Callow. By Daniel Rosenthal

FOR DRAMA students and young unemployed actors it is the perfect part-time job. Free to attend classes or auditions during the day, they are paid about £4 an hour to continue their education in the evening by seeing more

experienced performers in action. Granted, they have to sell programmes and help the audience find their seats or the nearest toilet, but there are many more exhausting and less congenial occupations than that of theatre usher.

We won't have realised it at the time, but many of us have had our ticket for a West End show checked by a future star of stage and screen. Jonny Lee Miller, of *Trainspotting* and *Re-generation* fame, was on duty at the

Theatre Royal Drury Lane in the early days of *Miss Saigon*.

Jennifer Pride and Prejudice Ehle may have pointed you to the bar at the Lyric on Shaftesbury Avenue. Long before *Inspector Morse*, Kevin Whately

inspected tickets at the National, as did Simon Callow and Christopher Ecclestone. The list goes on. So next time you buy an interval ice-cream, remember to check out the vendor. You never know who they'll become.

SUSANNAH FELLOWS

currently Mrs Darling in 'Peter Pan' at the National

"PETER PAN is my first acting job at the National and the building now feels much warmer and lived in. I began ushering at 15, when the company was based at the Old Vic, and I was a drama student. I liked the sense of community with company and staff eating together."

I was there in 1971 when Olivier was in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. One day he was standing in front of me, in his dressing gown, in the canteen queue. He'd forgotten his glasses and asked me to choose his dinner for him.

That was quite a moment.

I went back to ushering while at LAMDA, and was on duty when the Queen and Princess Margaret opened the National's South Bank building in 1976. I remember workmen hacking bits of concrete off the Olivier circle to improve the acoustic just before the opening.

Christopher Reeve worked in the



bar then and, in his pre-Superman days, was quite skinny: I always had a terribly sunny disposition when I was on duty. I'm sure that rubbed some people up the wrong way."

Peter Pan is at the Olivier, RNT (0171-452 3000) to 20 Feb

REBECCA LACEY

currently Dr George Woodman in 'Casualty'

"I LEFT school at 18 and ushered at the National for about two years. I didn't go to drama school, so observing so many great actors close up was a fantastic education. I must have watched *Guys and Dolls* 70 times.

I had great trouble with ice-cream selling in the intervals. In that frantic 15 minutes, people tell you what they want and hand you cash at tremendous speed, and I'd often give them too much change. If your float didn't add up at the end of the evening, then you had to pay the difference out of your own pocket, and I would regularly have to pay two or three pounds - when the shift was only paying me £12.

My worst moment came during Stoppard's *Rough Crossing* in the Lyttelton in 1984. In the middle of one performance, a tall, dark-haired man walked in and stood at the back of the stalls. I told him: 'I'm sorry, sir, you can't come in.' He replied: 'No,



it's alright.' I kept insisting and so did he. People in the audience started shushing us. I'm very short but I attempted to push him into the foyer. Finally he walked out with me and said: 'It's alright because I'm Tom Stoppard.' I was a laughing stock for weeks."

Julian got me a job as an usher-

ette - but I didn't enjoy it. The only memorable thing that happened was that a woman mistook me for the actress Elinor Summerfield, who was very big in rep. She said she felt rather sad that I should be ushering. Summerfield was a lot older than me but the harder I tried to explain the more the woman thought I was trying to cover up.

I was so frustrated at not being on stage that I almost couldn't bear to watch the productions. I was relieved to be promoted to selling postcards in the foyer. I must have been quite good because I was about to be moved to the box office when, because they were short of actors for crowd scenes, Julian managed to get me into the company."

EILEEN ATKINS

'The Unexpected Man', 'Vita and Virginia', screenwriter of 'Mrs Dalloway'

"I WAS 21 when Julian Glover, my then husband, and I moved up to Stratford. He was a member of the RSC for the 1955-56 season. I had worked as an actress but thought I should be giving up the theatre. I went up expecting to just sit at home and be a wife, but RSC actors were paid £6 a week and we desperately needed extra money.

Julian got me a job as an usher-

ette - but I didn't enjoy it. The only memorable thing that happened was that a woman mistook me for the actress Elinor Summerfield, who was very big in rep. She said she felt rather sad that I should be ushering. Summerfield was a lot older than me but the harder I tried to explain the more the woman thought I was trying to cover up.

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CHRISTOPHER LUSCOMBE

currently Smee in 'Peter Pan'

"USHERING is a very privileged job for an aspiring actor. From 1982 to 1985, I ushered at the National during all my vacations from Cambridge. I was paid £3 an hour, and enjoyed it hugely.

There were some terrible confrontations when you told late-comers they couldn't go in. The most common response was 'Don't you know who I am?' from managing directors of big companies.

When Ralph Richardson was in *Inner Voices* by Eduardo de Filippo, in 1983, he was not well and missed several performances. When the audience found out, some people would demand their money back. You had to convince them that watching another member of the National's company in the part came to the same thing, when you knew and they knew that it didn't.

After Cambridge I went straight into acting, and when I was unemployed I did more ushering. It was suddenly embarrassing to be a National usher when I felt I should have been up on stage.

I know the backstage so well from those days that it's felt oddly familiar being back for *Peter Pan*."

RICHARD SISSON

composer and pianist, *Kit and the Widow*

"IN 1979, Kit Hesketh-Harvey and I had just left Cambridge and were sharing a house and working in cabaret. Kit had a soft job as a BBC arts researcher, but I went to work at the Aldwych.

We were known as 'ticket checks' and were the lowest in the hierarchy. The ushering was OK, but what was really important was the musical work I picked up. I was sitting in the green room having a coffee and the RSC's musical director asked what I did. When I told him I was a pianist he hired me as assistant musical director for the next show, *Bulgakov's The White Guard*.

The ticket check uniform was navy blue with braid. After 18 months I was so attached to it I couldn't bear to think of anyone else wearing it, so I stole it and wore it to fancy dress parties.

The world and its granny used to come to see the RSC. Nureyev was a regular, but I'm not sure whether



tearing his ticket is as much of a feather in my cap as serving pats to Indira Gandhi and sausages to Richard Nixon, which I did as a waiter at Claridge's."

Goodnight Children, Everywhere, with music by Richard Sisson, opens at The Pit (0171 638 8891) on 23 Feb

Without breathing a word

The London International Mime Festival opens tomorrow. Watch this face... By Judith Palmer



The Blue Boys: the question is, which ones are flesh, and which fibreglass?

du Parodis, the return of the above Russian master-clowns Derevo, Bou's bubble-blowing artistry, and a chance to catch Fauly Optic's hellish micro-mechanics by live-relay video projection.

"British artists tend to feel very nervous with no text," suggests Lannaghan, "whereas French performers seem to have the confidence to find something beautiful and artistic without the need to breathe a word. Then, if something needs to be said, and flapping your arms seems like a real effort, it's better just to say it," she concedes.

The Franco-American duo BP

Zoom are more likely to communicate by playing the spoons. Crouched behind the wheel of a curvy Fiat Cinquecento, the porty Mr B (Bernard Collins) purses his lips and peers through his bottle-glasses with the air of a fat gourmand in a sidecar; while his oft-bin chum, Mr P (Philippe Martz), keeps a lookout for fresh hazards. BP Zoom (named after a Fifties petrol brand used in model cars) are straight from the cabaret/music-hall tradition. "The characters are based on our natural proclivities," admits Collins, who, by some sacrilegious quirk, finds himself performing in

side Winston Churchill's frock-coat. "The comedy comes from the different way we see the world: I'm right-handed left-brained, and Philippe is truly left-handed." Since all the action is contained within the car, the audience have to pay attention to all the tiny gestures. "We try to do as much as possible, with as little as possible," says Collins.

A+B=X, a dance-based piece

from the Swiss choreographer

Gilles Jopin, uses a trio of synchronised bodies, creeping cootily

across the floor in ultra-

slowed-down extenuated moves.

Super-8 coloured projections light up

the mesmeric naked shapes, so that you're not always sure which hit of a body you're looking at. A bare, industrial sound-track by Franz Treichler is equally pared-down, as a snatch of film showing the body-artist Franko B with his mouth sown shut flickers proceedings to a close. "I'm trying to stretch out the relativity of time," explains Jopin, "the sense that the same amount of time can last hours or be very quick, depending on your own perception." The piece has so far been rejected by all the usual dance venues. "Dance-programmers don't like things they can't classify, or work that's too engaged, so I'm really grateful that the Mime Festival is so open," Jopin says.

Neil Thomas, an Australian artist who spent 16 years living in a Belgian shop-window this summer, finds doing his shows like "being in a pressure cooker - a massive experience, like going to the moon or the Antarctic". This time based in the Natural History Museum, Thomas will be found daily in a glass case in the human biology section, with other azure-painted bald-headed Blue Boys. Some are mannequins but it won't be easy to spot the flesh from the glass fibre, as they are all intricately animated.

The Blue Boys will be observing the puppets closely - mute throughout - which is the way Helen Lannaghan prefers it. "It's so powerful and stroog watching something in silence," she says. "I'll be in a show, the tension rising, and I'm sitting there praying, don't break the magic, please don't say anything."

The Blue Boys, Natural History

Museum 9-31 Jan; *A Special Offer*,

Young Vic Studio 11-23 Jan; BP

Zoom, Purcell Room 13-17 Jan;

Gilles Jopin, ICA 19-21 Jan. The

Mime Festival begins Saturday

until 24 January (0171-637 5661)

A right royal mid-life crisis

THEATRE

THE WINTER'S TALE

RSC

STRATFORD

anism of a man who, through some sudden intuition of inadequacy, is running scared of his own life. You can see that in the tense, sinching, eyes-averted way he can barely maintain his pose of stiff, judicious contempt in the presence of his accused wife (superbly played by Alexandra Gilbreath). Even as he snarlingly reels from his newborn daughter, you can feel his tremendous attraction towards her, along with the cankered sense of unworthiness that compels him to deny it. Sick to the point of fainting, he cannot let go of his delusion because his delusion is his defence.

The regenerative aspects of the pastoral fourth act are rammed home, so to speak, with a boisterous clog dance by the rustics who thrust phallic root vegetables through their flies. An appealingly Welsh Autolycus, Ian Hughes effects his thefts in the guise of a singing parody of Gregory Doran's Edwardian/ Romano-style production.

A portly, bearded, mad-eyed figure in ermine and full regalia, he enters a court that stands frozen like statues to the sound of the paranoid whisperings about to invade his mind. Better than any Leontes I have seen, he proceeds to show that the king's manic mistrust is not so much an outbreak of evil as a kind of massive mid-life crisis that is at once frightening, farcical and pathetic. The receding panelled walls of Robert Jones's set subjectively close in on Sibyl as he regresses into a crouched, childishly sobbing yet mercilessly vindictive breakdown-victim. This is the great insight of the performance: that the spitting hatred is the defence mech-

PAUL TAYLOR

In rep (0171 295623)

MUSIC

LYRIC SHEETS

MARTIN NEWELL

A new concept album representing examples of music from the last 2,000 years is due out soon. Twenty Centuries of Hits' ranges from fragments of ancient Greek music through plainsong to 'Stardust' by Hoagy Carmichael (below) and the Kingsmen's 'Louie Louie'.

Number One with a Slingshot



All the way from AD1
Twenty centuries at the top
It's "Epitaph of Seikilos"
(Ancient Greek drinking song)

Still at number three
In the Big 2.0.0.

It hasn't shifted yet.

"Oxyrhynchus Hymn Fragment." There's an icicle story behind this; It's the anonymous Greek words and notation of a 3rd-century hymn found on a bit of papyrus in 1922.

Down to Number Eight
Another anonymous early English hymn from Salisbury.
"Urbs Ierusalem Beata."
Wow. How Oasis is that?

The Anonymous Benedictine Still holding steady at Number Nine
With "Ave Maris Stella"
No thanks, matey.
Gives me a headache

Watch out Saxons!
Brand new at Number Eleven
Is Wipo Of Burgundy
With "Victimae Paschali Laudes".

At Fifteen, "Quam Pulcra Est". Quite. Then Number 16, "Greensleeves" Not the Remix-Feat. Henry VIII. The original by Richard Jones.

No change at Seventeen. "Barbara Allen"
Nineteen: "Swanee River"/"Amazing Grace"
Right up to the present time, A double new entry at Number Twenty. It's Bing with "Stardust". And The Kingsmen with "Louie Louie". Can't see that one lasting, pop pickers.

LUCINDA WILLIAMS
CAR WHEELS ON A GRAVEL ROAD

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***** 1/2 Perfect... a masterpiece
Rolling Stone

It's a flat-out marvellous record
Mojo

Supplies the missing link between Sheryl Crow and Neil Young

The Times
American songcraft at its very best
Time Out

Like islands in the stream

So the future's wearing a scary Celine Dion mask, is it? Not necessarily.

Pop is alive and well and kicking rock's behind. By Ben Thompson

The fag-end of 1998 glowed red with fears for pop's future. There were many good reasons to be anxious: the imminence of a time when Prince's "1999" would look back rather than forward; the prospect of Alan McGee going on about the Internet at even greater length; widespread fears as to what will happen to him as well as to us when Robbie Williams' heroic conviction that just being Robbie Williams may be enough no longer suffices. And, on the credit side of the new year balance sheet, things looked even bleaker.

Could Gay Dad (elderly ex-music journalists clutching glam textbooks) and a swing revival masterminded by ex-members of the Stray Cats really be all we have to look forward to in the millennium's dying embers? The answer to this thankfully hypothetical question is a resounding and triumphant "No way, Grandad!" The future is not waiting around the corner wearing a scary Celine Dion mask and clutching a stocking full of Spice coins; it is already upon us. And very exotic and wonderful it sounds, too.

Cher's wobbly voice treatment on "Believe" (inspired, *OK* magazine revealed, by no less a musical pioneer than Roachford), the strange hubbub-hubbub noises in the background of Mousse T's "Horny", Air playing "Sexy Boy" live in the style of Tik and Tok, the Beta Band swapping instruments among on-stage gypsies, Beck forsaking the Dust Brothers' sample library for the joys of his live band. Once you start listing last year's hopeful signs into the great beyond, it is hard to know when to stop.

The holiday season alone brought two great pop moments, though admittedly both of them involved *The Tamperer* featuring Maya, on ITV's *Record of the Year* - a bizarre pop plebiscite hosted by Denise van Outen. With Boyzone winning and *The Tamperer* coming last, it tended towards the conviction that democracy, like Kestrel Superlager, is something of which one can have enough. The gladiatorial ring of the intimidating hook line of "Feel It" ("What's she gonna look like with a chimney on her?") was reinforced by the fact that all those performing it were dressed as gladiators. On the Christmas Day edition of *Top of the Pops*, Maya took to the stage dressed as Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz* and threw a toy-dog Toto over her shoulder with regal savagery. Black, white, gay, straight - this gesture had something for everyone. "Feel It" is built around a sample from The Jacksons' "Can You Feel It?" so brazenly obvious it would make Puff Daddy blush, and yet so ingenious in its simplicity that it not only works on its own merits, but also makes you think about The Jacksons in a different way every time you hear it. In the hands of *The Tamperer* - also responsible for that other great rallying cry of 1998, "If You Buy This



Things to look forward to in '99: Mogwai (above) and Maya (right)

Record Your Life Will Be Better" - pop is not in any kind of trouble. In fact, pop is doing very nicely, thank you. If a rock that's in trouble.

A couple of years back, the very idea of that old pop/rock division had begun to seem a bit ridiculous. At Cool Britannia's apogee, the 1996 Brits awards, the music industry was able to celebrate a convergence of critical acclaim, its own musical taste and what the kids were buying, unmatched since The Beatles. Jarvis wiggled his bottom in front of Michael Jackson. Noel Gallagher spoke of the 17 people giving hope to Britain (Oasis, their road crew, Lorraine Kelly, Ainsley Harriott, etc) and all was rosy in the Britpop sandpit.

that it was he who was stealing Oasis's souls at Glastonbury that fateful summer of '95, not the other way round? In the fact that the Spice Girls' gorgeous "Goodbye" contained a folk harmony ("You're not here, interfere") straight out of the Gorky's Zygotic Mynci songbook. In the way B*witched, perhaps aware that it is no longer cool - if indeed it ever was - to say "What are you like?" now enlivens the spoken-word moment in "C'est La Vie" by saying something different each time in a manner clearly influenced by Arab Strap's "First Big Weekend".

So next time someone tries to tell you that Boyzone's inexplicable continuing hold on the nation's pre-pu-

It's wrong to stigmatise a generation for insisting there's more to life than Ocean Colour Scene

Since then, a classic younger sibling rebellion has taken place - every hit as vigorous in its own way as punk or acid house - against the massed forces of what a dissenting music press voice courageously dubbed "dad-rock". As galling as the Day-Glo vacuity of Steps may be to more refined palates, it would be wrong to stigmatise a new generation for insisting that there must be more to life than Ocean Colour Scene.

What could be more natural than to want something shiny, new and honest in its artifice? If I were an 11-year-old girl with the choice of the debut album by B*witched or Pulp's grim and gruelling *This Is Hardcore*, I know where my pocket money would be going.

Watching an imperious Mel C and a suitably sulky All Saint on BBC2's *Never Mind the Buzzcocks*, magnificently oblivious to the pub-rock humour of their host and team captains where, a couple of years ago, Louise Wener would have been desperate to play along, it was hard not to conclude that ladish irony had been routed.

What we have now is two parallel worlds which cross over only at magical random points. In the shy and retiring person of the aforementioned R Williams Esq (who would have thought

hescient hearts is somehow a bad thing, reply that consensus is the enemy of progress. Last time everyone got all gloomy about the future of pop, Tony Parsons had barely finished telling us it was dead before Suede emerged from the ruins with an intoxicating whiff of formaldehyde.

Tempting as it is to wave away the

ay-sayers this time around with a

disdaining flick of a perfumed glove, it

is worth remembering that booztmeant record companies throwing

money at every bogus Britpop

ensemble that ever got a parking ticket

on Camden High Street. A bit of new-

found perspective doesn't go amiss, and

now that the seemingly endless flow of

blowhards and half-wits proclaiming

themselves "the best band in the

world" has slowed down, room is opening

up for some genuine innovation.

Any climate in which the Beta

Band's charismatic proto-folk ambling

is everyone's idea of the new thing can

only be a healthy one. Ditto an epoch

that can consider a charmingly ir-

esponsible maverick such as Baddy

Drawn Boy a serious commercial

proposition. Ask the latter reckless zeit-

geist surfer what he has in mind for his

debut album and be will say: "I'm con-

stantly amazed by what is possible - the way someone with an acoustic guitar can just blow you off your feet."

Acoustic guitars that can blow you off your feet: that's one thing to look out for in the year ahead. The great Will "Palace" Oldham reborn as fearless old people's home cabaret entertainer Bonnie "Prince" Billy, that's another one. The record that the Scottish tension and release specialists Mogwai have just made in the Catskill Mountains with Mercury Rev's Dave Fridmann should be something to savor. And let's not forget electronics treated like real instruments.

Sitting in the North London bedroom where she recorded the whole of her amazing 1998 Martian soul debut, *Like Weather* (Rippled), Björk's former sample trigger Leila Arab demonstrates the hand-held mixer on which she made her first recordings.

"You listen to the great hands," she explains, thumbs battering the tiny console with the practised ease of the hardened computer game veteran, "whether that be The Doors or the John Coltrane Quartet. I'm talking about ensembles that played shit hot together. Their dynamics - the bass gets loud at one point then the

guitarist tries to get in... No one's really got to that with electronics, which is why I try to treat electronics like real instruments, so that when I'm mixing a song, each channel is a band member fighting for supremacy."

Each channel is a band member fighting for supremacy. The future is going on ahead to meet the past round the back. The millennium is like Bill Clinton's penis: the closer you get to it, the less interesting it is. Think about how long it seems since Gary Barlow was the ex-Take That man most likely to. Mark Owen was the dark horse and Robbie Williams was just a tubby also-ran. Now imagine the joy of a whole new century to fill with stuff of that quality! Why don't we put in some pre-emptive retaliation and just get on with it?

Mercury Rev, Mogwai and Bonnie "Prince" Billy all play the London Astoria (0171-434 0403) in the week beginning 18 January. Ben Thompson's book *Seven Years of Plenty* (Victor Gollancz, £10.99) is already in the shops



GOD IS IN THE DETAILS

NO 1: 'LET'S GET MARRIED'



With ample cause and just impediment: Bruce Springsteen and Al Green



someday, and then having the nuptial com to do something about it.

However, the details in the song give Bruce away. "I Wanna Marry You" is also an account of the trajectory of a man's gaze as it homes in on an impoverished, lonesome wolf "pushing that baby-carriage" stoically through the badlands

of an unfulfilling life. What Bruce really wants to do, bless his heart, is rescue the girl from single-parenthood and, with heart-stopping condescension, "maybe help her dreams along". Nice try, big guy, but self-effacing heroism is not what we look for in a pop marriage. Or in any marriage for that matter. And besides, the chick won't be impressed with a dowry entirely composed of high moral intentions rendered in the form of car metaphors. This may be rock'n'roll, but it's also narcissism.

No, there's only ever been one decent pop song about marriage, and it's one that

concedes that proposals of marriage are fundamentally

traumatic; that in the moment of commission, they are composed neither of fine sentiments nor of deep self-possession, but of the sound of dogs barking.

Soul great Al Green's your man. His "Let's Get Married" begins with a typical rippled Memphis rhythm before settling down to one of the all-time great opening lines: "Sitting here, wasting my time for you".

Furthermore, Al is "not too crazy about the idea of having nothing to do". Nothing else for it, then. "Let's get married," he suggests. Well, it beats picking your nose.

You'd expect that this would be the point at which moon will suddenly rhyme with June and doves will make their customary appearance in the eaves of nice cottages. Not a bit of it. Al intensifies his proposal with a qualification - "let's get married... together" - and then dries up, altogether... "Might as well," he gasps, as the rhythm section clicks into the bridge. And at a stroke, marriage and pop find union, not in fine feeling or high passion but in that place we all retreat to in moments of profound crisis: inertia.

NICK COLEMAN

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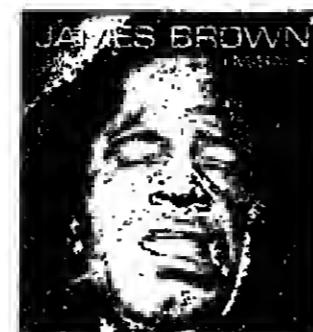
THIS WEEK'S ALBUM RELEASES
REVIEWED BY ANDY GILLJAY-Z
Vol 2... Hard Knock Life
NorthWestSide

IT MAY have given Jay-Z his chart break through in Britain, but that cringe-making 'orphans' chorus from *Annie* he sampled on "Hard Knock Life" may turn out to be something of a millstone around the rapper's neck, for rarely can a single have made the transition from intriguing to infuriating with such dispatch. Not that Jay himself will be that bothered, given his extraordinary success in America, where this album recently spent five weeks atop the charts - an unprecedented feat for a rap record.

Whether this is a good thing for rap is another matter entirely. The cover shot, with Jay surly and stylish alongside his Bentley ragtop, echoes an earlier album sleeve by money-oriented hip-hop duo EPMD, and sends off identical signals of materialistic apathy. The whole world, clearly, can go to hell, so long as Jay's on cruise control. Jay's commanding position

has been based less on the content of his raps than his vocal style, which involves tongue and tonsil twisting around absurdly paced strings of rhymes - a technique best employed here on "Nigga What, Nigga Who", a bravura staccato duet with the similarly auctioneer-styled Big Jaz.

A few other numbers approach this standard, and there are occasional neat touches in the backing tracks, such as the tuned percussion in "Can I Get A...". But the overwhelming impression left by raps like "If I Should Die" and "Ride or Die" is depressingly downbeat, a desultory re-hearsal of the only narrative available to black American youth today. The most compelling and committed performance here is the anti-snitch diatribe, "A Week Ago" - further evidence, were it required, of the way the modern black American experience has become increasingly defined by criminal discourse.

JAMES BROWN
I'm Back
Eagle

THE ABSENCE of the exclamation mark in the title rather gives the game away. Back when James was the Godfather of Soul and the Minister of the New New Super Heavy Funk, there would be not the slightest doubt that he was *Back!* - make that *Back! Back! Back!* - with a vengeance. And appropriately so, given that he based his entire musical style, words and sounds, on the principle of exclamation. Here, James is just *Back*, as if uncertain whether this is cause for celebration. You can hear why: he's hoarse and even less intelligible than usual, and the grooves that Derrick Monk has fashioned for him are flaccid and uninspiring - when James sings "I don't hear no music", he's not kidding. The album's failings are most glaringly betrayed by the clear superiority of the three versions of "Funk On Ah Roll", which is basically just old JB cuts like "Hot Pants" and "The Payback" looped and scratchedit together with James squawking over the top.

LONNIE DONEGAN
Muleskinner Blues
PCA

THOUGH JUST as seminal a veteran as James Brown in 1956, his "Rock Island Line" served alongside "Heartbreak Hotel" in both the UK and US Top Tens. Lonnie Donegan displays a much firmer grasp of his craft on this, his first studio album in over two decades. It's an enjoyably animated outing which finds him trying out new material like Paul Kennerley's cheerfully sardonic "The Welfare Line", and revisiting old skiffle chestnuts like "Stewball", "Muleskinner Blues" and "I'm Alabamny Bound" in the company of Van (the fan) Morrison. Lonnie's old tradjazz boss Chris Barber and virtuoso guitarist Albert Lee. Donegan's voice is as keenly flexible as ever - surprisingly similar to Van's on their duets - and he slips with ease between folk, skiffle, slower blues numbers and even cajun stylings. It's nice to note that "Rock Island Line", the original voodoo invocation of British rock'n'roll, retains every bit of its peculiarly piping power more than 40 years on.

ANI DIFRANCO
Up Up Up Up Up
Righteous Babe

THE FEMINIST folkie's 12th album on her own Righteous Babe label is a frustrating, patchy affair which switches awkwardly between contemplative rumination, measured scolding, and several stabs at a kind of skeletal funk that's neither fish nor fowl. It's not a bad record, it just suffers from a lack of focus. The folkier songs are replete with the usual complement of soundbite slogans - "Half of learning how to play" - and the subdued backings are evocative. But the witter of production embellishment - treated vocals, echo effects, double-tracked vocals, breakdown sections - on tracks like "Angel Food" and "Hat Shaped Hat" suggests that the attempts to apply a mild funk dressing aren't fully thought-out. No sooner have the organ, piano and rhythm section grafted a new solidity on to the material than they're breaking up and scattering in dub-style deconstructions, leaving the songs stranded between genres.

LEE PERRY
Lost Treasures Of The Ark
Orchard/Star

ANY LEE Perry reissue is a welcome addition to the world's fund of musical madness, and though this triple CD set isn't up to the standard of the 1997 *Arkology* triple album culled from The Upsetter's mid-Seventies peak period, it fills in many of the gaps in the producer's chequered career. It's a diverse selection, ranging from Perry's early solo work - including "Django Shoots First", the precursor to his 1969 breakthrough hit "Return Of Django" - through to the later dub innovations. The compilation's trump cards are four Bob Marley collaborations, each eking out with numerous dubs (including no fewer than three marginally different versions of "Shocks Almighty", a song Perry revised countless times in his career), though the set is studded with casual brilliance throughout from lesser names in the reggae firmament, with the likes of Dave Barker advocating we do the "Stanky Chicken", and Denzil Ring claiming his lady is "fat - like a bat". WG Grace's, presumably.

RIFFS

THE FIRST AND LAST RECORDS BOUGHT BY ACTOR RICHARD O'BRIEN

First Record: Mario Lanza "I'll Walk With God" Lanza was a flash tenor who some people thought wasn't serious enough. I liked him because I was quite a good church-goer and sung in the choir. I am not a great opera buff. You sit for an hour and a half,

and an hour and 15 minutes is filled with dialogue such as "I am coming through the door and picking up a plate". Anyway, when you are 11 you don't really question why you like something - your gut and your heart tell you, not your head or publicity.

Last Record: Toni Childs "Many Rivers" Childs is absolutely, stunningly wonderful. They used one of her tracks on a film I worked on. Everyone was blown away. I couldn't understand - here is such a voice and great arrangements being

ignored and singers like Lianne Rimes are getting a reputation. When Childs sings the blues, she doesn't spoil it with histrionics. Richard O'Brien's album 'Absolute O'Brien' (Medical Records) will be released next month

HER 1993 tour was called Girle Show, but will Madonna pip the Spice Girls to the neonatal post with Mummie Show? The protean Italian-American "friend of Johnny Vaughan" has said she will hit the road later this year for her first tour in six years. Not to be upstaged, Alanis Morissette and Elton John also plan world tours.

Meanwhile, Harvey Goldsmith, a big promoter in the music biz and the man behind Live Aid who wasn't Bob Geldof, has hinted on Talk Radio that there may be a Live Aid-style concert for the millennium. Yippee.

PLANS ARE afoot to ensure that this year's summer

SLEEVE NOTES

festivals don't go off like

1998's damp squibs.

A safe bet for success is

the 10-day festival to be held

in Carlyon Bay, Cornwall (6-

15 August), to mark the first

total eclipse of the sun in this

country since 1927.

The Phoenix Festival will

rise from the ashes after last

year's cancellation, scheduled for 15-18 July at

Long Marston, Stratford-Upon-Avon. The Mean Fiddler organisation has plans to make the Reading Festival a two-site event, running the same weekend in Leeds and Reading. Could there be a problem with the Leeds site also being used for the V99 Festival, only the week before?

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SIGHT READINGS



MICHAEL CHURCH

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON always has a finger to the wind, and it's no surprise that the record label's first serious crossover record should showcase a Gypsy violinist.

It's also no surprise that this remarkable record - which is everywhere on sale in Euroland - should not be available in Britain. If you want to buy *Lakatos* you have to cross the Channel. It's not on sale here because DG's London office "can't decide how to launch it".

While we await Roby Lakatos's coming, plenty of other Gypsy groups are filling the gap. Shortly before Christmas the folk singer Marta Sebestyen led her Transylvanian group Muzsikas in a Festival Hall concert designed to show how faithful Bartók stayed to the music he found on his travels. Not even bog-standard amplification could destroy the exhilaration of the evening. Last week, London's Purcell Room was taken over by the Loyko Russian Gypsy band, again woefully over-amplified - will the South Bank never learn? Two violinists and a guitarist all doubling as vocalists, this was essentially a cabaret act, but wonderful nevertheless. Imitations of birdsong apart, their music is largely unadorned. As their records confirm, these musicians go for beguiling harmonies and clean lines, with a Kreislerish sweep and swagger.

On 18 January, the most extraordinary Gypsy band in the world will begin a week at Ronnie Scott's in the capital. Most people know them as Taraf de Haidouks - from two celebrated records on the Cramword label - but the word *de* simply reflects the fact that their discoverers were Belgian. A taraf is



Taraf de Haidouks: the most extraordinary gypsy band in the world prepares for a stint at Ronnie Scott's

a Romanian village band, *haidouks* are Robin Hood-style brigands, and the story of Haidouks' emergence is fittingly romantic.

It began when two young enthusiasts named Michel Winter and Stéphane Karo heard some amateur recordings and decided to find their source. They knew the name of the village, but thanks to Ceausescu's attempts to obliterate the peasantry, the pair had to locate the place without the aid of a map. They eventually found 100 musicians (qualities that usually come as an after-effect). Their singing is at once hard and sweet; their rhythms catch

representative handful for a tour to Belgium. They made a record, and then another one which went to the top of the world music charts, and the rest is history.

If Ronnie Scott's doesn't amplify them to hell, we shall get a whiff of Haidouks' alchemy: with the aid of voices, violins, accordions and cimbaloms, they interweave sounds from Hungary, Turkey and Arabia. The key is their astonishing blend of wild emotion and artistic virtuosity (qualities that usually come as an after-effect). Their singing is at once hard and sweet; their rhythms catch

the ear off balance, while maintaining a powerful momentum. And their harmonic shifts make the brain reel: it's best not even to try an analysis of the structure - just let the rest is history.

How has fame affected the musicians? According to Winter, some of them are now rich by local standards (with cars and bathrooms) while others are in debt with the mafia. They still spend half the year at home playing for weddings, and they're still completely anarchic. Is their art in danger of losing its purity? "Their art was never pure,"

replies Winter. "They've always behaved like musical magpies. But the ballads the old men sing may soon die out, because the young men aren't learning them." He admits that the band are now at a turning-point, but he thinks that the vastness of their repertoire will be their saving grace. Ironically, Winter and his friends are the other saving grace: now that Romania is succumbing to American entertainment's lethal global embrace, bands such as Haidouks must depend on fans abroad.

Meanwhile, Winter is continuing

the good work. Check out another Cramword record - *Kocani Orkestar* - for the Gypsy brass band he found at a wedding in Macedonia. While Haidouks are fiably mercurial, these tireless blowers create their own grave beauty.

IT'S WORTH noting that the Loyko Gypsy ensemble were all classically trained: one of the Soviet Union's cultural glories was its music education. With representatives of four ex-Soviet republics starring with the Royal Opera during its short run

at Sadler's Wells, this seemed like a good week to quiz the singers on their homelands' musical past and present.

Ilya Levinsky is based in Germany but hails from Baku, and would love to work again in the Azerbaijani capital. "But I could not develop my career there. When civil war broke out, culture came to a complete halt, and it has not recovered since," she says. Elena Kolesniki left her native Kazakhstan in the general exodus of talent after Communism's demise, but was spurred on by the decree that all singing teachers must henceforth speak not Russian but Kazakh. She, too, would love to go back to sing, "but as they have no money, I would be doing it for charity".

Alexandra Durseneva is a contralto Bolshoi mezzo who grew up in Khar'kov where her mother was a celebrated singer. She too was dismayed by the post-Communist injunction to sing in the local language, but the main incentives for her departure were the hemorrhage of talent and the impossible working conditions in the Khar'kov opera house. "But we all love our motherlands - we can't stay away," she says. Though now a globetrotting star, the Georgian bass Paata Burchuladze has never left his native Tbilisi, where despite threats of civil war he recently staged an opera festival. But in his view the crisis in singing-training is not confined to the old Soviet bloc. "Almost all the great teachers are dead. I know one or two in Georgia, and one in Odessa, but in Milan, for example - where all the world comes to study - I don't know of one good teacher. The great tradition is dead."

QUESTION: WHY did Julian Lloyd Webber fill a page of Monday's *Daily Telegraph* with a petition rant against the new film *Hilary and Jackie*? Answer: Because the poor boy has a record to sell, a concert to promote, and an ongoing visibility problem in the shadow of his illustrious elder brother.

If Jacqueline du Pré were to bear *Jackie's Song* - the watery little tribute the cellist is playing at the Wigmore on Sunday - she'd dismiss it with one of those four-letter words to which he takes such prissy exception in the film.



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THE COMPACT COLLECTION

ROB COWAN ON THE WEEK'S NEW CD RELEASES

YOU COULD spend the best part of a lifetime exploring Haydn's symphonies, and still hunger for more. There are 107 in all, but those known as the *Sturm und Drang* symphonies harbour some of the biggest surprises. Haydn wrote them in the late 1760s and early 1770s, experimenting with minor keys (something that was rare in symphonies of the time), and toying with unconventional tempos, bold tonal colours, weird modulations and unexpected rhythmic computations.

Past recordings of the *Sturm und Drang* have tended to centre around half-a-dozen or so relatively familiar works, but Frans Brüggen's new set with the Orchestre of the Age of Enlightenment makes an

early start with No 26, known as *Lamentatione* (with clear echoes of Gregorian chant), then goes on to feature 18 more symphonies on five CDs. The performances are neatly tailored, rhythmically supple and energetic. Period instruments are used, which makes for welcome textural transparency, and Brüggen revels in every outlandish musical gesture. Just try the exuberant opening of No 48, *Maria Theresia*, the "Fire" Symphony's tempered presto.

The Beethovenian pathos of No 44's allegro con brio, or the startling cross-accents in No 65's minuet. Musical conventions are repeatedly challenged, always to entertaining effect. The roll-call of inventive ideas goes on, and Philips's vivid recordings (made at

Blackheath Concert Halls between 1994 and 1997) add to the excitement. I doubt that the year's release sheets will yield a fresher crop of symphonic masterpieces.

Turning to chamber music, none that I know of speaks more personally, or more warmly, than the piano trio of Robert Schumann. Hyperion's CD of the first two Trios by the gifted Florestan Trio offers a thoughtful response, pensive though clear-thinking in the D minor and lyrical in the rarely-heard

F major. Schumann's fondness for self-quotation informs the Trio No 2, but it is the first that claims the profoundest ingredients, and the richest yield of melody.

The contrast in mood between Schumann's First and Second Piano Trios finds

a rough parallel with Dvorák's Seventh and Eighth Symphonies, now usefully - and cheaply - coupled on a fine Deutsche Grammophon "Galleria" CD featuring vintage recordings by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Rafael Kubelik. The Seventh is as unsettled as the Eighth is sunny, and Kubelik connects with the founding inspirations of both. The sound might be relatively dated, but the interpretations are truly timeless.

Haydn/Brüggen: Philips 461 112-7 (five CDs for the price of four).
Schumann/Florestan: Hyperion CDA67063.
Dvorák/Kubelik: Deutsche Grammophon 457 902-2 (budget).

ON THE AIR

ADRIAN JACK

ANYTHING VAGUELY millennial or 20th century is branded "Sounding the Century" by the BBC and I've thoroughly lost my way among its widely dispersed sub-series, such as *The Year and Setting the Score* on Radio 3. There seems to be a compulsion to take stock of our cultural baggage as if we're in danger of losing it in 12 months' time, but "Sounding the Century" hasn't - so far - been broadcast, if it has even been planned. In a way the listener can make sense of Radio 3's first commitment seems to be its inexorable DJ-led sequences, and programmes that are really about something, whose content is deeply considered, are not given scheduling priority.

One hopeful sign of a more focused approach to the millennium was the first of a 52-part history of jazz which Russell Davies launched in the early evening last Saturday. This

first 30-minute talk, with generous musical illustrations, was by way of a ground-clearing operation, seeking a definition of jazz.

Of course, everybody knows that jazz is not a matter of what instruments or how many, and Davies merely dismissed that suspicion - at some length - in order to play some cute examples, such as the boogie-woogie player Meade Lux Lewis tickling a celesta. Some great jazz musicians disliked the word "jazz" altogether, protesting that they were simply playing music. Yet when an ad hoc wind quartet, including Coleman Hawkins and John Coltrane on tenor sax, played "Abide with Me" on a Thelonious Monk album, they were certainly making a statement about musical style. Davies called them "po-faced" - though

"insouciant" might have accounted better for their combination of strict tempo, casual ensemble and slipped note-endings to allow for massive intakes of breath. So-called "classical" musicians would have tried, even if they didn't succeed, to play that hymn tune together, and they would have rounded each phrase as if putting it into shape, not ostentatiously left it to take care of itself. But they wouldn't have had such an unshakeable sense of beat.

Davies used this example to show that you couldn't necessarily tell jazz by the names of the players. But even though these musicians were not about their most serious business, they still exuded the spirit of jazz early definitions of which Davies pointed out, were

"messing around" or "taking liberties". Those aren't trivial interpretations, if considered in a historical context, and though you could hardly argue against the grander description of jazz as "an expression of the American spirit", Davies's most telling insights came at the start of the programme when he analysed the characteristics of a snatch of Louis Armstrong (left) warming up over studio chatter. This allowed him to pinpoint some of the characteristics of jazz - in particular, an aggressive quality of attack, strict pulse, and flexible pitching. To which he added a declamatory character.

Even Armstrong's short first note - "a bit like the explosive call of a jackdaw" - proclaimed him a jazz player. If the rest of the series can match this level of enlightenment, it will be unmissable.

Jazz Century is repeated at 11.30pm today on Radio 3.



مكتبة من الأهل

NEW FILMS

LITTLE VOICE (15)

Director: Mark Herman
Starring: Jane Horrocks, Michael Caine
Holed up in her bedroom, timid North Country sparrow LV (Jane Horrocks) cannibalises her dead dad's record collection, perfects strident Shirley Bassey/Judy Garland impersonations, then falls in with Michael Caine's impresario; a low-rent, Bermuda-shirted buckster with one rheumy eye on the big time. Brenda Blethyn trundles around in a hip-hugging mini-skirt as LV's mum, Ewan McGregor pops up as a simple pigeon-breeder; and seedy seaside cartoonery runs as a garish visual backdrop. Where Mark Herman's last film, *Bronzed Off*, was a whole and solid effort, *Little Voice* proves altogether more bitchy and picaresque. For while the director does a decent spot of carpentry in remoulding Jim Cartwright's stage-play for the screen, the result still trades in gestures and caricature and is further hindered by tentative pacing. Bracing black comedy, Horrocks's vocal pyrotechnics, plus a marvellously weighted turn from the rejuvenated Caine push it through to the final curtain. *West End: ABC Tottem Court Road, Barbican Screen, Curzon Cinema, Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Phoenix Cinema, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket*

THE SIEGE (15)

Director: Edward Zwick
Starring: Denzel Washington, Bruce Willis

A rare Hollywood attempt to get to grips with contemporary geopolitics. *The Siege* winds up a hopelessly fingers-and-thumbs affair: The nominal hook (Muslim terrorist bombing in New York) gets dropped with all manner of garbled goings-on as Denzel Washington's FBI man rubs shoulders with Bruce Willis's gung-ho army renegade. Zwick desperately attempts to touch all the bases, but even the fiery, kinetic editing can't gloss over his film's messy marriage of perfunctory liberalism and noisy chest-beating. *West End: Elephant & Castle Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road*

THE (15)

Director: Darren Aronofsky

Starring: Sean Gullette, Mark Margolis

Aronofsky's pungent debut idles in a kind of anteroom between maths lesson and art class, as Sean Gullette's New York number-cruncher ponders a numerical code behind the holy Hebrew texts, and designer flourishes overrun the screen. The rhythm runs on a staccato beat – the tone is self-consciously lugubrious. What sustains it is the pure-blood ingenuity of its central conceit: Co-ceived as a *Casablanca* cash-in, and irreverently adapted from what Hawks reckoned to be Hemingway's worst novel, this wartime drama is credited with getting Bogart (the unhappily married megastar together with an 18-year-old Bacall) the two proficient plot has Bogart's Martinique-based skipper sandwiched between the Vichy government and the Free French resistance. Hawks directs with a pointed, easy grace. *West End: Curzon Soho, Gate Notting Hill, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Green, Screen on the Hill*

PSYCHO (15)

Director: Gus Van Sant

Starring: Vince Vaughn, Anne Heche

Homage or sacrifice? Photocopy or experiment? Whichever camp you fall into, Gus Van Sant's

Xan Brooks

GENERAL RELEASE

THE ACID HOUSE (18)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Odeon Camden Town, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket, Warner Village West End*

ANTZ (PG)

Computer-animated comedy voiced by a stellar cast stars Woody Allen as worker-ant "Z". *West End: UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero*

THE APPLE (S18) (PG)

Samirah Makhmalbaf's precocious debut stages a true-life re-creation of the fortunes of Iran's Naderi sisters. Part docu-drama, part rites-of-passage fable, this is a luminous and extraordinary missive from a burgeoning Iranian film scene. *West End: Metro, Renoir*

BABE: PIG IN THE CITY (U)

The follow-up to *Babe* tosses the hapless "sheep pig" into the midst of the city where he becomes the unlikely saviour of a bunch of waifs. Comedy is kept to a minimum in favour of a bleakly atmospheric fairy tale. *West End: Plaza, UCI Whiteleys*

DANCING AT LUGHNASA (PG)

Less a dance, more of a trudge, Pat O'Connor's Ireland-set saga pinpoints the ebb and flow of an eccentric Catholic family in deepest Donegal. What gives it backbone is Meryl Streep's regal performance as the brood's eldest sister, plus the ever-watchable Michael Gambon as the homecoming brother. Kathy Burke, Catherine McCormack and Brid Brennan also feature. *West End: Boreham Screen*

THE DREAM LIFE OF ANGELS (U)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: ABC Swiss Centre*

ELIZABETH (15)

Shekhar Kapur's follow-up to *Bandit Queen* is the story of a female figurehead struggling to gain purchase in a male world. But opportunities for fun are largely neglected in a story of independence triumphing over cruelty. *West End: ABC Pantomime, Curzon Minima, Odeon Mezzanine*

ENEMY OF THE STATE (15)

Will Smith's fall-guy DA teams up with Gene Hackman's pensioned-off Pentagon warhorse and gets embroiled in all manner of Big Brother-type trouble. This is a big, noisy and effectively claustrophobic conspiracy thriller, with a top-drawer cast including Jon Voight and Gabriel Byrne. *West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Hammersmith Virgin, Notting Hill Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero*

THE MASK OF ZORRO (PG)

This gaudy swashbuckler gallops through 19th-century California in the company of Antonio Banderas's authentically Hispanic do-gooder. *West End: Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End*

MULAN (U)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Odeon Mezzanine, Warner Village West End*

THE NEGOTIATOR (15)

Samuel L Jackson and Kevin Spacey go head to head in Gray's thrilling drama. *West End: Warner Village West End*

OUT OF SIGHT (15)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Curzon Minima, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Phoenix Cinema, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End*

shot-by-shot *Psycho* reconstruction is a bizarre undertaking. Here, the original's high-contrast black-and-white is dumped in favour of Edward Hopperish colour. Hefty Vince Vaughn stands in for twitchy Anthony Perkins, Anne Heche for Janet Leigh, and Julianne Moore for Vera Miles. In the meantime, Van Sant simply runs through a karaoke cover version of the Hitchcock classic: a pitch-perfect bit of movie mimicry which has a definite curiosity value without ever quite adding up to much more besides. File this one under "White Elephants". *West End: Empire Leicester Square, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket*

THE FIVE BEST FILMS

THE FIVE BEST FILMS

The Acid House (18)

A trio of interrelated shorts culled from the stories of Irvine Welsh. *Debut director Paul McGuigan turns this into a bit of a triumph, adapting his style well to the shifting landscape of Welsh's tales. A cracker, all told.*

The Dream Life of Angels (18)

Erick Zentz's remarkable debut draws its strength from the contrasting personalities of Isa (Elodie Bouchez) and Marie (Natalia Rybina), whose friendship comes alive amid the drab environs of Lille.

Mulan (U)

In Disney's animated tale, a girl disguises herself as a soldier to spare her ailing father from certain death in combat. This movie has it all, and is one of the most visually innovative films that Disney has ever made.

Out of Sight (15)

Steven Soderbergh's tale of love on opposite sides of the law knocks spots of previous *Elmire*. Leonard adaptations, and boasts in Jennifer Lopez and George Clooney the swoniest cinema pairing of the year.

The Unbearable Lightness of Being (Curzon Soho)

Lyrical adaptation of Milan Kundera's novel, with Daniel Day Lewis (above) giving a dynamic performance as the philandering doctor who finds himself unexpectedly trapped by love. *Sun 12/1pm*

ANTHONY QUINN AND XAN BROOKS

CINEMA

WEST END

ABC BAKER STREET

(0870-902 0418)  Baker Street

The Prince of Egypt 1.40pm,

4pm Star Trek: Insurrection

1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

What Dreams May Come

6.05pm, 8.35pm

ABC PANTON STREET

(0870-902 0404)  Piccadilly Circus

Elizabeth 2.10pm, 5.10pm,

8.10pm The Last Days of Disco

1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm,

8.30pm My Name Is Joe 1.10pm,

3.35pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ABC SHAFTEBURY AVENUE

(0870-902 0412)  Leicester Square

Chainsaw Massacre 1.40pm,

4.10pm, 6.40pm, 8.40pm

What Dreams May Come

1.05pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.05pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE

(0870-902 0403)  Leicester Square

6.10pm, 8.15pm

8.45pm What Dreams May Come

1.05pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD

(0870-902 0414)  Tottenham Court Road

Enemy of the State 1.40pm,

3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

Star Trek: Insurrection

4.05pm, 6.25pm, 8.45pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE

(0870-902 0404)  Leicester Square

6.10pm, 8.15pm

8.45pm What Dreams May Come

1.05pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE

(0870-902 0405)  Leicester Square

6.10pm, 8.15pm

8.45pm What Dreams May Come

1.05pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE

(0870-902 0406)  Leicester Square

6.10pm, 8.15pm

8.45pm What Dreams May Come

1.05pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE

(0870-902 0407)  Leicester Square

6.10pm, 8.15pm

8.45pm What Dreams May Come

1.05pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE

(0870-902 0408)  Leicester Square

6.10pm, 8.15pm

8.45pm What Dreams May Come

1.05pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE

(0870-902 0409)  Leicester Square

6.10pm, 8.15pm

8.45pm What Dreams May Come

1.05pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE

(0870-902 0410)  Leicester Square

6.10pm, 8.15pm

8.45pm What Dreams May Come

1.05pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE

(0870-902 0411) Leicester Square

6.10pm, 8.

HAMPSTEAD
ABC (0870-9020413) \oplus Belsize Park Enemy of the State 2.10pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm Psycho 2.50pm, 5.50pm, 8.35pm Star Trek: Insurrection 2.30pm, 5.40pm, 8.25pm

HARROW
SAFARI CINEMA (0181-426 0303) \oplus Harrow on the Hill Dofi Sajake Rakhus 1.30pm, 5pm, 8.45pm The Soldier (Asian Film) 8.45pm

WARNER VILLAGE (0181-427 9009) \oplus Harrow on the Hill Energy of the State 1.10pm, 6pm, 9.30pm, 11.40pm Little Voice 12.35pm, 2.50pm, 5.05pm, 7.20pm, 9.40pm, 12.05pm The Mask of Zorro 11.25am, 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.30pm, 11.20pm The Prince of Egypt 11.45am, 2pm, 4.45pm, 7.05pm Psycho 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.10pm, 12.20pm Rush Hour 12.30pm, 2.50pm, 5.10pm, 8.30pm, 9.50pm, 12.30am The Siege 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.15pm, 9.20pm, 11.50pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.15pm, 4.40pm, 7.40pm, 8.40pm, 11.55pm What Dreams May Come 6.20pm, 8.50pm, 11.30pm

HOLLOWAY
ODEON (08705-050007) \oplus Holloway Road Enemy of the State 1.25pm, 1pm, 3.30pm, 5.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm, 9.30pm Little Voice 1.15pm, 2.35pm, 5pm, 7.25pm, 9.30pm The Mask of Zorro 1.15pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.50pm Psycho 12.25pm, 2.45pm, 5.10pm, 7.35pm, 10pm Rush Hour 10pm, 1.45pm, 7.05pm, 9.45pm Star Trek: Insurrection 12.20pm, 2.40pm, 5.05pm, 7.30pm, 9.55pm

ILFORD
ODEON (08705-050007) \oplus Gants Hill Enemy of the State 2.40pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm Little Voice 1.50pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm The Parent Trap 12noon The Prince of Egypt 11.40am Psycho 12.40pm, 3.20pm, 5.30pm, 7.50pm, 8.35pm The Siege 12.10pm, 2.50pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.20pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm

KILBURN
KILBURN TRICYCLE CINEMA (0171-328 1000) \oplus Kilbourn The Voice 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm (+ Short: Kings of Siam with 8.45pm performance only)

KINGSTON
ABC OPTIONS (0870-9020409) ABC: Kingston Enemy of the State 2.25pm, 5.15pm, 8.05pm Psycho 2.25pm, 6pm, 8.25pm Star Trek: Insurrection 2.25pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

MUSWELL HILL
ODEON (08705-050007) \oplus Highgate Enemy of the State 12.50pm, 3.20pm, 5.55pm, 8.30pm The Prince of Egypt 12.10pm, The Siege 1pm, 3.40pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm Star Trek: Insurrection 2.05pm, 4.15pm, 6.35pm, 8.50pm

PECKHAM
PREMIER (0181-235 3006) BR: Peckham Rye Blade 11.35pm Enemy of the State 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 9pm, 11.40pm Little Voice 5.05pm, 7.10pm, 9.15pm The Player's Club 11.55pm Psycho 4.45pm, 7.05pm, 9.15pm Rush Hour 5.20pm, 7.20pm, 9.35pm, 11.35pm The Siege 4.20pm, 6.50pm, 9.20pm, 11.50pm Star Trek: Insurrection 4.50pm, 7.15pm, 9.30pm

PURLEY
ABC (0870-902 0407) BR: Purley Enemy of the State 1.35pm, 4.55pm, 8pm The Siege 2.10pm, 5.10pm 8.10pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 8.35pm

PUTNEY
ABC (0870-902 0401) \oplus Putney Bridge Enemy of the State 2.15pm, 6.15pm, 9.15pm Little Voice 2.15pm, 4.45pm, 7.15pm, 9.30pm Star Trek: Insurrection 2.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm

RICHMOND
ODEON (08705-050007) \oplus Richmond Enemy of the State 3pm, 6pm, 9pm Little Voice 2.40pm, 7pm, 9.30pm The Parent Trap 12.10pm The Siege 12.40pm, 2.40pm, 5.40pm, 8.40pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm

ODEON STUDI (08705-050007) \oplus Richmond Antz 1pm The Mask of Zorro 2.10pm, 5.40pm, 8.40pm Out of Sight 6.30pm, 9.20pm The Prince of Egypt 2.10pm, 4.20pm Psycho 2.50pm, 6.30pm, 9.20pm Star Trek: Insurrection 2.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (08705 050007) BR: Romford Enemy of the State 1.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.15pm, 9pm Little Voice 12.05pm, 2.10pm, 4.50pm, 6.25pm, 8.35pm The Mask of Zorro 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.50pm The Parent Trap 12.30pm, 3.15pm, 6.40pm The Prince of Egypt 12.10pm, 2.20pm, 4.30pm, 6.50pm Psycho 2.45pm, 7pm, 9.20pm Rush Hour 8.50pm The Siege 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm What Dreams May Come 9.15pm

ROMFORD
ABC (0870-9020419) BR: Romford Enemy of the State 2.25pm, 5.20pm, 8.10pm Psycho 2.30pm, 5.55pm, 8.25pm Star Trek: Insurrection 2.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.35pm

RICHMOND
ODEON (08705-050007) \oplus Richmond Enemy of the State 2.15pm, 4.55pm, 8pm The Siege 2.10pm, 5.10pm 8.10pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 8.35pm

STAPLES CORNER
VIRGIN (0870-9070717) BR: Cricklewood Enemy of the State 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm, 11.45pm Little Voice 2.10pm, 4.25pm, 6.25pm, 8.35pm The Prince of Egypt 2.25pm, 4.45pm, 6.50pm, 8.50pm The Parent Trap 1.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm Star Trek: Insurrection 2.30pm, 6.05pm, 8.40pm

STREATHAM
ABC (0870-9020415) BR: Streatham Hill Antz 6.40pm The Prince of Egypt 2.20pm, 5.55pm, 8.25pm Star Trek: Insurrection 2.30pm, 6.05pm, 8.40pm What Dreams May Come 8.35pm

STUDIOP
ABC (0541-55151) BR: Studiop Psycho 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.40pm

SWANSEA
ABC (0870-9070717) BR: Swansea Common Enemy of the State 12.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.30pm Star Trek: Insurrection 2.30pm, 6.05pm, 8.40pm

The Siege 1.50pm, 4.20pm, 7pm, 9.30pm Star Trek: Insurrection 12.10pm, 2.30pm, 4.50pm, 7.10pm, 9.40pm

STRATFORD
NEW STRATFORD PICTURE HOUSE (0181-552 3166) \oplus Stratford East Enemy of the State 4pm, 7pm, 10pm Little Voice 2.30pm, 4.45pm, 7pm, 9.45pm The Mask of Zorro 1.30pm, 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.30pm, 11.20pm The Prince of Egypt 2.45pm, 7pm, 9.05pm Psycho 3pm, 5.30pm, 8pm, 10.30pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1pm, 3.15pm, 5.15pm, 7pm, 9.30pm

SUTTON
UCI 6 (0990-888990) \oplus Morden Enemy of the State 3.15pm, 6.05pm, 9.15pm Little Voice 1.15pm, 4.30pm, 7.45pm, 11.55pm Little Voice 2.15pm, 4.25pm, 6.40pm, 8.50pm The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm The Parent Trap 2.30pm The Prince of Egypt 2.30pm Psycho 5pm, 7.20pm, 9.45pm, 12.15pm, 12.30pm The Siege 4.10pm, 6.55pm, 9.30pm, 12.05pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.55pm, 6.30pm, 9pm, 11.30pm

SURREY QUAYS
UCI (0990-888990) \oplus Surrey Quays Enemy of the State 4pm, 6.50pm, 9.45pm, 11.30pm Little Voice 1.15pm, 4.30pm, 7.45pm, 11.55pm The Mask of Zorro 2.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.40pm, 11.55pm The Prince of Egypt 4.10pm, 6.20pm, 9.05pm, 12.05pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.55pm, 6.30pm, 9pm, 11.30pm

SYDNEY
UCI (0990-888990) \oplus Sydney Enemy of the State 3.15pm, 6.05pm, 9.15pm Little Voice 1.15pm, 4.30pm, 7.45pm, 11.55pm The Mask of Zorro 2.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.40pm, 11.55pm The Prince of Egypt 4.10pm, 6.20pm, 9.05pm, 12.05pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.55pm, 6.30pm, 9pm, 11.30pm

THEATRE
WEST END

Ticket availability details are for today times and prices for the week: running times include intervals. \oplus

— Seats at all prices \ominus — Seats at some prices \ominus — Returns only Matinees — (1) Sun, (3) Tue, (4) Wed, (5) Thu, (6) Fri, (7) Sat

ALARMS AND EXCURSIONS
Michael Frayn's new comedy about a dinner party which is interrupted by mysterious messages stars Felicity Kendal and Jane Lawrence.

MISS SAIGON Musical which relates the Modern Butterfield tragedy to Vietnam. Theatres Royal, Drury Lane, Catherine Street, WC2 (0171-454 5060) \oplus Covent Garden, Mon-Sat 7.45pm, (4) 7pm, £5.75-£5.95, 165 mins.

THE MOUSETRAP Agatha Christie's whodunit at St Martin's West Street, WC2 (0171-836 1443) \oplus Leic Sq, Mon-Sat 8pm, (3) 2.45pm, (7) 8pm, £10-£24.50, 135 mins.

MR PUNTILLA AND HIS MAN Matti Soen Foley and Hamish McColl star in a new version of Brecht's comedy satire. Albany St, Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-369 1369) \oplus Leic Sq, Mon-Sat 7.45pm, (5) (7) 8pm, £10-£25, 9.15pm, 160 mins.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA Andrew Lloyd Webber's Gothic musical, His Majesty's Haymarket, SW1 (0171-944 5400) \oplus Picc Crc, Mon-Sat 7.45pm, (4) 8pm, £10-£25, 180 mins.

ANNIE Raggedy Annie's story of the optimistic orphan. Victoria Palace, Victoria Street, SW1 (0171-834 1317) \oplus Victoria, Sat 7.30pm, (4) 7pm, (11) 4pm, £7.50-£12.50, 165 mins.

DEMENT Musical inspired by La Bohème and set in modern day New York. Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2 (0700-211221) \oplus Holborn/Fins Crc, Mon-Sat 7.30pm, (4) 8pm, £12.50-£15.20, 160 mins.

ROYAL NATIONAL THEATRE \oplus Peter Hall's new comedy about the life of Who Boy Would Not Grow Up. In rep tonight 7.15pm, ends 20 Feb.

NT2000: THE VOYAGE Inheritance Harley Granville Barker's expand of City scandal and corruption for NT2000. Tonight 6pm.

LYTTELTON: BETRAYAL Peter Hall's new musical based on Chekhov's The Seagull. Tonight 7.15pm, ends 7 Apr.

THE BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Lewis' family musical based on Disney's version of the fairytale. Donmar Tavern, Court Road, W1 (0171-369 1736) \oplus Tot Crd, Mon-Sat 7.30pm, (5) (7) 8pm, £12.50-£15.20, 160 mins.

THE BLOOD BROTHERS Willy Russell's long-running family musical drama. Phoenix Charing Cross Road, WC1 (0171-369 1733) \oplus Tot Crd, Mon-Sat 7.45pm, (5) 8pm, £12.50-£15.20, 165 mins.

THE BOOGIE NIGHTS \oplus Boogie Nights stars in a 1970s musical. Savoy Strand, WC2 (0171-836 8888) \oplus Charing X, Mon-Thu 8pm, Fri-Sat 8.30pm, (6) 5.30pm, £12.50-£15.20, 165 mins.

WALTHAMSTOWE ABC (0870-902 0424) \oplus Walthamstow Central Enemy of the State 1.40pm, 4.50pm, 8.10pm The Siege 2pm, 5pm, 8pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.20pm, 4.30pm, 6pm, 8.20pm

UXBRIDGE ODEON (08705-050007) \oplus Uxbridge The Siege 1.25pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm

WYKES ODEON (08705-050007) \oplus Wykies Enemy of the State 3.15pm, 6.05pm, 9.15pm The Mask of Zorro 2.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.40pm, 11.40pm Little Voice 1.15pm, 4.30pm, 7.45pm, 11.55pm The Prince of Egypt 1.30pm, 4.40pm, 7.50pm, 11.55pm Psycho 2.15pm, 5.20pm, 8.30pm, 11.30pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.15pm, 4.20pm, 7.30pm, 10.30pm

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FRIDAY RADIO

RADIO 1

976-998MHz FM
6.30 Zoe Ball: The breakfast show, with music and morning entertainment. 9.00 Simon Mayo: With Radio 1's Greatest Hits - the Mystery Years. 12.00 Kevin Greening. 2.00 Mark Radcliffe. 4.00 Chris Moyles. 6.00 Pete Tong's Essential Selection. 9.00 Judge Jules. 11.00 Westwood - Radio 1 Rap Show. 2.00 Fabio and Grooverider. 4.00 - 7.00 Emma B.

RADIO 2

88-902MHz FM
6.00 Alex Lester: The Dawn Patrol: news and music, plus a review of the morning's papers. Including 6.15 Pause for Thought. 7.30 Sarah Kennedy. 9.30 Ken Bruce. 12.00 Jimmy Young: Talking to the people who make the news. Phone the comment line on 0500 288291. Lines open from 11.30am to 1.15pm. 2.00 Ed Stewart. 5.05 Des Lynam. 7.00 A Very British Story: Michael Freedland presents a four-part personal exploration of the British film industry over the last 60 years. In the first programme, he takes a look at the British industry as a whole and talks about the film studios like Pinewood, Elstree, Denham and Ealing. With contributions from Bryan Forbes, Peter Rogers, Lord Puttnam, Michael Winner and Jack Gold. See *Pick of the Day*. 7.30 Friday Night is Music Night: Introduced by Richard Baker from the Hippodrome, Golders Green, London. Barry Wordsworth conducts the BBC Concert Orchestra, with guest artists Janis Joplin, Richard Whitehouse and pianist Geoff Eales. At 8.15, during the interval, Richard Baker introduces music on disc from Plácido Domingo. 9.45 Wuthering Heights. 9.30 Listen to the Band: Frank Renton presents extracts from 'A Night at the Opera', a massed brass band concert in which he also conducts Fodens (Courtois) and Brighouse and Rastrick bands. 10.00 David Jacobs. 10.30 Sheridan Morley. 12.00 Lynn Parsons. 4.00 - 6.00 Late Sharta.

RADIO 3

90.2-92.4MHz FM
6.00 On Air.
9.00 Masterworks.
10.30 Artist of the Week.

PICK OF THE DAY

MICHAEL FREEDLAND provides a personal guide to 60 years of British movie-making in *A Very British Story* (7pm R2). Mercifully, the programme doesn't wallow too much in soundtrack-assisted nostalgia or gripe excessively about the successes of Hollywood. There are cool appraisals of the current state of the industry from insiders, as well as succinct

clips from yesteryear including a welcome blast of *Night Mail*, written by WH Auden (right).

The *Ghost of Number Ten* (6.30pm R4) has the makings of a hilarious satire on New Labour: Maggie Steed plays the ghost of a socialist Victorian prostitute who haunts the Prime Minister in an attempt to spirit up some tangible policies.

DOMINIC CAVENDISH



11.00 Sound Stories.

12.00 Composer of the Week: Poulen.

1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert.

2.00 The BBC Orchestras.

4.00 Music Restored.

4.45 Music Machine.

5.00 In Tune

7.30 Performance on 3. Conductor Robert Hollis and Raphael Wallfisch (cello). Part 1: If Bach Had Been a Beekeeper. Peter Vasks:

Canterbury for strings: Maxwell Davies: Cello Concerto (Strathclyde Concerto No 2). Kevin O'Connell: North (BBC commission; first broadcast). Schoenberg: Chamber Symphony No 2.

9.20 Postscript: Five specially commissioned dramatic monologues that combine fiction and a news story: '5 At 'Sea' by Pippa Gladhill (R).

9.30 Quantz Flute Sonatas. Rachel Brown (flute), James Johnstone (harpischord), Mark Caudle (cello).

10.00 Hear and Now: Verity Sharp talks to Irvine Arditti about a recently released CD of chamber music by Elliott Carter. Fragment for string quartet; Cello Sonata; Fragment for solo; Duo for violin and piano; 90+ for piano; String Quartet No 5. Ursula Oppens (piano). Arditti Quartet.

11.30 Jazz Century.

12.00 BBC Symphony Orchestra.

1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.

RADIO 4

92.4-94.6MHz FM

6.00 On Air.

9.00 Masterworks.

10.30 Artist of the Week.

9.45 Serial: The Vanished World.

10.00 NEWS: Woman's Hour.

11.00 NEWS: Sentimental Journey. (R)

11.30 The Oldest Member.

12.00 NEWS: You and Yours.

12.57 Weather.

1.00 The World at One.

1.30 Screen Test.

2.00 NEWS: The Archers.

2.15 Afternoon Play: Jerusalem North. (R)

3.00 NEWS: Logged On.

3.45 This Scattered Isle.

4.00 NEWS: Clubclub.

4.30 The Message.

5.00 PM.

5.57 Weather.

6.00 Six O'Clock News.

6.30 The Ghost of Number Ten. See *Pick of the Day*.

7.00 NEWS: The Archers.

7.15 Front Row: Francine Stock with the arts programme, including a pick of new paperbacks.

7.45 Under One Roof. Concluding the last of three five-part dramatisations from the Michael Henson stories, with Janet Maw, Edna Dore and Luisa Bradshaw-White.

8.00 NEWS: Any Questions?

Jonathan Dimbleby is joined in Stone, Staffordshire, by singer Billy Bragg; Bormola Christopher, former head of press and publicity at the Department of Health; Iain Canan Smith, shadow social security secretary; and Alan Michael, Secretary of State for Wales.

9.45 Letter from America. Alistair Cooke with another slice of Amer-

icana.

9.00 NEWS: The Friday Play: The Year of the Tiger. By Tina Pepler. When Joe is given an unusual assignment in Bangladesh, little does he realise that he will be bewitched both by real tigers and by the turbulence of the Chinese Year of the Tiger. With Emily Joyce, Paul Bazely and Nitin Chandra Ganatra. Director Marion Nancarrow.

10.00 The World Tonight. With Robin Lustig.

10.45 Book at Bedtime: Nana. Juliet Stevenson reads Emile Zola's novel (*5*).

11.00 NEWS: Late Tackle. Eleanor Oldroyd hosts another edition of the late-night sports chat show.

11.30 Sporting Philanthropists.

12.00 News.

12.30 The Late Book: The Restraint of Beasts.

12.48 Shipping Forecast.

1.00 As World Service.

5.30 World News.

5.40 Inshore Forecast.

5.45 Prayer for the Day.

5.47 Leisure Update.

5.56 - 6.00 Weather.

RADIO 4 LW

198kHz I

9.45 - 10.00 An Act of Worship.

12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast.

RADIO 5 LIVE

693, 909kHz MW

6.00 Breakfast.

9.00 Nicky Campbell.

12.00 The Midday News.

1.00 Ruscoe and Co.

4.00 Drive.

7.00 News Extra.

7.30 Alan Green's Sportsnight.

Alan Green and his studio guests discuss the week's sporting issues. Plus live commentary from Nationwide League Division One, where Tranmere take on Wolves.

10.00 Late Night Live. Insight and comment on the day's big issues with Brian Hayes. Including *Partapart*. 10.30 Sport. 11.00 News.

11.15 The Financial World Tonight.

1.00 Up All Night.

5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

CLASSIC FM

1000-1019MHz FM

8.00 Henry Kelly. 12.00 Requests.

2.00 Concerto: Mozart: Flute Concerto in D, K314. Emmanuel Pahud, Berlin PO/Claudio Abbado. 3.00 Jamie Clegg. 6.30 Newsnight. 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven. 9.00 Evening Concert: Mozart: Symphony in F, K76. English Concert/Trevor Pinnock, Elgar: Cello Concerto in E minor. Mstislav Rostropovich, Moscow PO/Gennadi Rozhdestvensky. Tchaikovsky: Eugene Onegin (Letter scene). Galina Gorchakova (soprano). Krov Orchestra/Valeri Gergiev. Tchaikovsky: Symphony No 5 in E minor. Washington NSO/Mstislav Rostropovich. 11.00 Alan Mann. 12.00 Concerto. 3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths.

VIRGIN RADIO

1125, 1197-1260kHz MW

105.8MHz FM

6.30 Chris Evans. 9.30 Russ Williams. 1.00 Nick Abbot. 4.00 Harriet Scott. 7.00 Wheels of Steel. 11.00 James Merritt. 2.00 - 6.00 Paul Coyle.

WORLD SERVICE RADIO

198kHz LW

1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Meridian (Books). 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 People and Politics. 3.00 World News. 3.15 Sports Roundup. 3.30 World Business Report. 3.45 Insight. 4.00 Newsdesk. 4.30 Weekend. 5.00 Newsday. 5.30 - 6.00 My Century.

RADIO 4 LW

198kHz I

9.45 - 10.00 An Act of Worship.

12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast.

RADIO 5 LIVE

693, 909kHz MW

6.00 Breakfast.

9.00 Nicky Campbell.

12.00 The Midday News.

1.00 - 8.00 Mike Dickin.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS
JON SPEELMAN

CONGRATULATIONS TO Ivan Sokolov who has won the Hastings Premier with a round to spare. A draw on Wednesday against Laurent Fressinet took him to 6/8.

Meanwhile Jim Plaskett showed tremendous strength of character to recover from the painful loss I gave yesterday, and defeat Sergei Shipov. I squeezed a win against a disheartened Mihail Saltaev in the endgame below - the poor man's fourth loss in succession - and the other two games, Emma vs Miles and Ponomariov vs Sadler, were drawn. This left a huge pile-up on 4.5: Shipov, Sadler, Ponomariov and myself. The other scores before yesterday's last round were Emma + Miles, Plaskett and Fressinet 3.5 and Saltaev just 2.

One I got c5 and b5, I had a serious space advantage but the problem was how to break through - since he can always meet g1 with ...g5 and h4 with ...h5.

The crisis came when Saltaev played 38... axb5? opening up a route for my king - 38... a5 was still a draw. If 41... Kd7 42 g1 followed by 43 g5 I eventually get my king to e5. Not 49 K?? Kc7! 50 c6 b6 and Black wins!

But he resigned, in view of 49... Kd7 50 Kb4 e4 51 Kc4 Ke6 52 Kd4 e3 53 Kc3 Kd5 54 c6 bx6 c6 Kxc6 Kd6 Kf4 Kd7 55 Kg5 1-0.

BRIDGE
ALAN HIRON

ON THIS deal from a spring foursome of some years ago, South (Dave Kendrick) set a little trap for the defence. Not many declarers would even have thought of the idea and (manifestly) neither did West!

West opened with a weak Two Hearts and, after two passes, South had a problem. Double was a possibility, suggesting spade support, but as a response of Three Diamonds would have been unwelcome, Kendrick finally settled for 2 No-trumps. At least, if partner was interested in progress and also beld four spades, he could explore with Three Hearts. At it was, North had no difficulty in raising to no-trumps.

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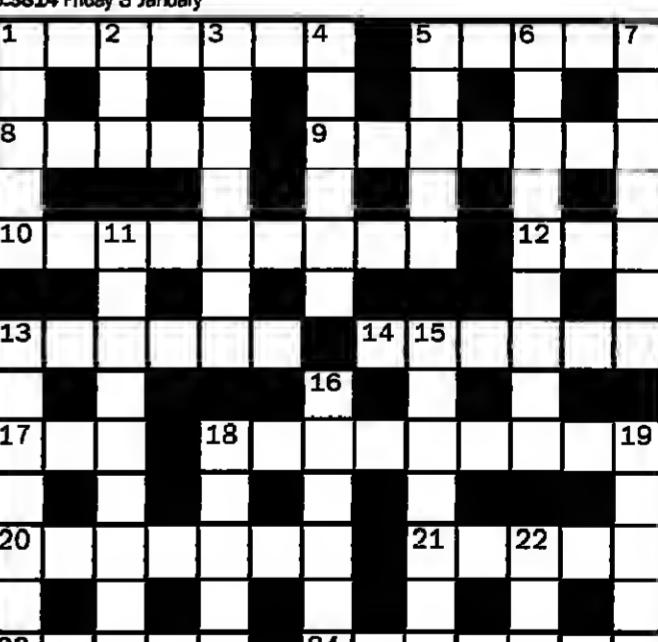
The card that he played at trick two was an extremely well chosen ♦4! West covered with six, confident that declarer proposed winning with dummy's king but, as you can see, ♦6 was the lowest miss-

ing spade and dummy was able to play low safely, leaving East to overtake. He returned a spade but declarer simply cashed all of his black suit winners, ending in hand, then exited with his last spade to East's jack. With nothing but diamonds left, East had to lead into dummy's tenace and that was the ninth trick.

Of course, West should have inserted ♦10 at trick two, but he simply did not consider that there was any possible danger in following with his six.

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3814 Friday 8 January



Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

